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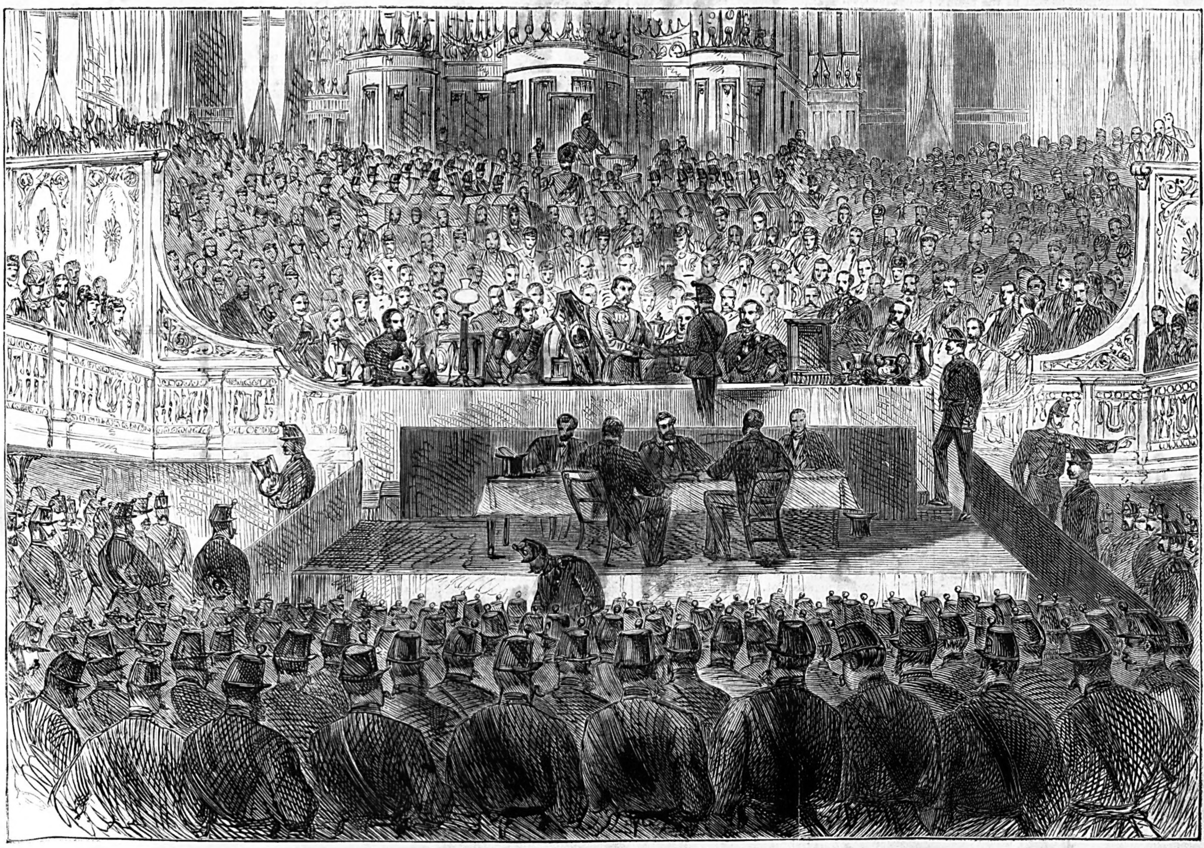
THE NEW YEAR.

New blotting pads, new desires, new resolves, new hopes. It is good for us that every New Year rekindles the hopefulness of man's nature. "Things will improve after Christmas." The customary stagnation of the closing in of December will be followed by a seasonable reaction in January. "With the New Year we shall no doubt have to report more favourably." It is the old, old story; but during the last few years it has been specially fallacious. Ever since the panic each New Year has been welcomed with some of the old feeling. The result has been unfavourable. Once more the change has come. It is January again. There are, however, symptoms of improvement, so far as trade and money go, which we hope this New Year will develop into certainties. So far as Birmingham is concerned, though business is quiet, it is steady and good. There is an absence of speculative trade and excitement; but everybody is at work, and steadily at work. The same may be said of the Midlands generally, and we are confident that manufacturers and traders have only to go on contentedly to find, in a short time, that the reaction is surely coming. Meanwhile no opportunity should be lost in the way of the art and industrial training of the young who are to succeed the present race of art and skilled workmen. It is only by a persistent improvement in our productions that we can hope to withstand the competition of the foreigner.

There is evidence on all hands that the New Year will advance us a step in art and technical and general education. We have in these columns over and over again pointed out the advantages of art applied to industry, and we hope by-and-bye to give some practical help to those who are labouring in this channel. With regard to the general education of the masses, the two great Leagues which are now before the public are doing a great and important work. Their very differences of opinion will do good; and so will their individual action, though it were better could they be united on certain established principles, and go hand-in-hand together. It is something that the country is at last fairly roused on the subject of National Education. The New Year opens well upon that question at all events.

Politically the horizon is somewhat clouded. There are matters pressing for settlement which are of vital importance to the nation. Electoral reform is happily for the present at an end, if we except the questions of Bribery and the Ballot. It is quite clear that strong action must be taken against the general system of corruption practised at elections. What this action shall be is difficult to say; but it is not at all improbable that Parliament will consent to try the Ballot. Ireland will monopolise the chief attention of the nation. The Land question will have to be discussed and settled. At present the Irish agitators simply ask for the landlords to be kicked out and their property divided amongst the "bould tinantry." This might be consulting the happiness of the greater number; and there are many in England who would like to see a similar territorial revision at home. It is to be hoped



LORD NAPIER DISTRIBUTING THE PRIZES TO THE BIRMINGHAM VOLUNTEERS AT THE TOWN HALL. *(See page 304).*

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that the Government will be firm in their resolution to do justice and not pander to Irish or to English demagogues. The country has seriously suffered through a timid Irish policy, encouraged by party feeling, but vacillation is destruction when Rebellion lifts her ugly head. Let justice be done to Ireland; she is part of ourselves, our welfare is her welfare, her prosperity our prosperity; let us be just to her, aye and generous; but down with sedition! down with priests, or laymen, who talk of "tumbling" landlords with a pistol, and let there be a short shrift for the abettor as well as the murderer. The New Year's Sun rises red and angrily over Ireland. But the good men and true of that lovely country can save her, if only the British Parliament play the part of a fair and fearless Government.

Looking abroad, the prospects of continued peace for England are undisturbed. The only possible dangers seem to come out of the political excitement in France. But the EMPEROR lives, and a few years more will completely cement his dynasty. The only other look-out which is slightly hazy is America. We have not yet settled the Alabama dispute. The REVERDY-JOHNSON treaty was and is still rejected; and a fresh basis of negociation is being sought. Happily the best men of the two nations are anxious to bring the matter to a mutually satisfactory issue; and the end cannot be far off, unless there be some official blundering.

Although we cannot see that the New Year has much real change in store for the nation politically, socially, or commercially; yet there are glints of promise here and there, gleams of light, which justify the encouragement of all our best hopes and aspirations.

THE CIRCUS.

Our engraving of "The Circus" tells its own story. The work of one of the most rising artists in Germany, Paul Meyerhein, it represents a French troupe of equestrians. The performers are just about to "take a turn" on "the outside" prior to a grand performance in the interior. The booth is pitched in the midst of the various rival attractions of a local fête or fair, and the riders are competing with the other gratis displays in front.

A circus is a circus all the world over, except that perhaps in England we are a little more extravagant in the way of clowns. In our picture the athlete leading Madame's horse is doing a little of the humourous, as well as the useful. He is demonstratively pinching the ear of that everlasting obtrusive youth whom you find everywhere—the boy who will push his way despite a score of "Now-then's" and "Where-are-you a-shoving-to's?" The well-trained horse with his padded saddle has trotted round and round the sawdust ring many a hundred times with that plump lady on his back, and will do the same useful work for many a year to come, and help to drag "the properties" from town to town as well, until, at last——Well, and what does become of the old circus horses? Who knows? We confess our ignorance on the subject. A fine little fellow is the boy whom Madame is holding with one of her round arms. She is his mother, that is easily seen, and is whispering a word of instruction to the young equestrian, who looks quite professional in his tights. His brother on the pony can take care of himself. There is nothing that they cannot do together, he and the pony. They have been companions in the ring and on the outside since the boy was the size of the masculine baby on the taller horse; and the young lady behind who is making a sign of recognition to some other performer, belonging to a friendly rival, perhaps, she and her old horse understand each other perfectly. They have bounded over many a "garter" together; he has halted in his amble thousands of times to wait for the close of her flying leaps through paper balloons. Pater in the semi-military costume is a very important figure in the picture, as he ought to be; for does he not guide and encourage and instruct the whole troupe? It is he who stands in the ring and flourishes that long whip which "cracks" so easily and effectively. He is riding the famous performing horse, which dances the polka, waltzes, walks on two legs, pretends to be dead, and does everything else, ladies and gentlemen, but talk. The money-taker, she is another of the circus proprietor's family, we imagine, and the very French dog has been one of the company from time out of mind. A wonderful dog, we are sure, who leaps through hoops, fires a pistol, has his legs stretched out over chairs, and is popular with the younger portions of the audience. The band is doing its best, the leading cornet more particularly. Looking at the picture one can almost hear the flourish which he is evidently executing with success; whilst "The African Prince" is tunefully marking time with cymbals and drum. The little crowd of admirers is a characteristic group, and the picture altogether is remarkably clever in conception and drawing. There is a touch of Wilkie's peculiar power in the group of spectators. Landseer might have done the pony and the dog. These two, the manager, and the horse carrying the woman and child make up a group of remarkable truthfulness, and the whole story of the circus is told with Frith's eye for detail, and with a breadth of effect that makes up a real picture in the best and most artistic sense.

TIMOTHY TICKLER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "VERDANT GREEN."

CHAPTER I.

THE TICKLER INTRODUCED.

"Look at that fellow! his appearance quite tickles me," said I to my friend Smith. We were brothers of the rod—not the birch-rod of children and school boys—but of anglers; and we had been out for a day's fishing. What sport we may have had, is neither here nor there; though there it was something considerable. Suffice it to say that we had spent a very pleasant day in the contemplative man's recreation, even if we had contemplated nothing else than the brawling stream, the overhanging trees, and the buttercup-meadows thickly dappled over with kine. We were now on our way home, and had stopped at the well-known little roadside inn, "The Fisherman's Arms," the signboard of which informed travellers that there was good entertainment both for man and beast to be found within its boundaries.

The beast that had drawn our hired "trap"—the name given to our vehicle by the driver, who had literally taken us in his trap—had, doubtless, found his entertainment sufficiently good; certainly ours was so, for the landlady's tea and poached eggs were everything that could be desired by hungry fishermen. Before we ordered the trap for our return home, we went out of doors and sat down to have a smoke on a rustic seat fixed on a patch of green sward under the cool shade of a wide-spreading chestnut tree. The open country was before us with the white gables of a cluster of thatched cottages, and the spire of the village church rising above a noble screen of elms.

Not far from us, seated on a bench that was fixed against the wall of the inn, was a man, shabby-genteel as to his dress, and with a droll look on his closely-shaven face. He had his eyes shut, and I imagined that he had fallen off into a summer drowse, acting upon which idea, I said to my friend, in a louder tone than I should otherwise have used, "Look at that fellow! his appearance quite tickles me!"

Contrary to my supposition, and somewhat to my confusion, the man proved to be wide awake; for he at once opened his eyes and said to me quite coherently, "I don't wonder that I tickle you, sir, it is my fate. I seem to have been born to tickle people, and to carry out the full force of my name. At an early age, destiny marked me as her own by bringing me into the world a Tickler. Such is my unfortunate name, gentlemen—Timothy Tickler, at your service." And he came forward towards our seat under the chestnut tree.

"I am sorry that I spoke so unguardedly," I said, "I had no intention of hurting your feelings. In fact, I imagined that you were asleep."

"I quite believe you, sir," replied Mr. Tickler, with extreme politeness, "but appearances are often deceptive. The fact is, that so far from being asleep, I was very hard at work. Some people think best with their eyes shut; and I was very deeply in thought, and was just running through my part."

"What part?" I asked.

Mr. Timothy Tickler might have been a Quaker, for he answered my question by asking one, "Then you have not been to the Milltown Theatre, gentlemen?"

"No," I replied, for self and partner, as business men write, my friend Smith being a taciturn fellow, and deprived of speech when furnished with a pipe; "we come from Gruby." Which was a market town six miles in another direction from Milltown.

"I see," said Mr. Tickler. "If you had come from Milltown you might possibly have recognised in me that same Frank Denvil whose fate it is to strut his little hour on the various boards in the Milltown circuit. In short, I am a play-actor, gentlemen—a comedian, stroller, vagabond—what you like. Frank Denvil, by fate, but Timothy Tickler by nature. To-morrow night is the manager's ben—I mean, benefit, gentlemen; for I daresay you are not acquainted with our professional terms. We come out with a new spectacular melodrama, in which I have a part of several lengths. Here they are!" and he took from his pocket some grimy pieces of manuscript. "I am a tolerably quick study; that is to say, I can soon commit to memory the words set down for me to speak; and I had strolled out here, and was just running over my part in my mind to see that I had got it pat. That was how I was busily engaged when I seemed to you to be asleep."

"I am sorry I disturbed you," I said. "Will you join us in a smoke and something to drink with it?"

Mr. Timothy Tickler at once accepted the offer and took a cigar from my case. The materials for a cooling brew were ordered and placed on a rustic table beside us. Mr. Tickler took his seat on a chair by this table, and in a few minutes we were as comfortable and chatty together as though it were far from being the first time that we three had met beneath the chestnut-tree in front of the roadside inn.

"I said, gentlemen," remarked our shabby-genteel acquaintance, "that it was no wonder that my appearance tickled you, for I was fated not only to be a Tickler in name but also in deed. Perhaps a brief sketch of a few of the leading events of my life may not be unacceptable to you, if you can lend me your ears for a time."

I nodded acquiescence, for self and partner; and we puffed and listened, while Mr. Tickler puffed and spoke, as follows.

CHAPTER II.

THE TICKLER IN EMBRYO.

"About! my brains," said Mr. Timothy Tickler, with a theatrical gesture, as we sat and smoked under the cool shade of the chestnut-tree, in front of the road-side inn, and listened to his promised narrative.

"Well, gentlemen! I think I need not trouble you with the full history of my birth, parentage, and education; or unfold my tale after the fashion of 'my name is Norval,' of the Grampians; or like we often have to do on the boards, when we bring two chairs to the front and say, 'It is now fifteen years since so-and-so happened, and took place before the action of the drama commenced;' but I will at once come to what we term business. As I was born into the world a Tickler, you will not be surprised that, as a little child, I was pleased with a whistle and tickled with a straw; or, that as a boy, I surpassed all my companions in the skill I displayed in tickling trout. But I will not dwell on that. I will come to a later period, and begin with Act the First after the Prelude.

"I don't pretend to be a gentleman-born; but my parents were in a respectable condition of life, and gave me a fair education. They apprenticed me, however, to nothing higher than to a shoemaker; thinking, I suppose, that I should make a fortune at the last."

Here Mr. Tickler made a professional pause, to give us time to see the point of his joke. I therefore inspected it, for self and partner—Smith being as case-hardened as a Scotchman in this particular; and Mr. Tickler, after having raised his glass to his head, proceeded to unfold his tale.

"The Mr. Vamper, to whom I was apprenticed, specially described himself as a Ladies' Boot and Shoemaker. He did the best business in the town, and also the most fashionable; which is, perhaps, not saying much; for it was but a small country town, where fashions had gone nearly out of fashion before they could reach our remote settlement. Such as it was, however, we had all the beauty and fashion of the place patronising the establishment of Vamper. I wrote a good hand, and could cast accounts; so my master kept me in the shop, to look to his books and to make out his bills, how he had tapped Mr., and new soled Mrs., and mended Miss, and patched Master. Then I was promoted to take the measures of our customers. I shall never forget the fatal day when Miss Plum, the daughter of our chief grocer, stepped into the shop and ordered a new pair of Balmorals; and, as Mr. Vamper was out of the way, I had to serve her.

"In my present sphere of life, gentlemen, I look to what we actors call 'hands.' A hand of applause is as meat and drink to us; it not only cheers us and gives us confidence, but, as the illustrious Mrs. Siddons observed, it does more, it gives us breath. But, at that period of my career, which I may term my boot-shop stage, I naturally looked not to hands but to feet; for, it was from them that I then expected to get my living, if, as the saying is, I could light upon my feet, by getting a footing in the trade."

As Mr. Tickler made another professional pause at this point, I felt constrained to give, for self and partner, the 'hand' that he desired. Smith puffing and speechless.

"Certainly, gentlemen, a scene-painter or artist might have had a worse scenic effect or study than Miss Plum's foot, as she laid it on the carpet, and its exquisite symmetry was revealed to so much greater advantage by the snowy stocking than by the walking-boot that she had taken off. As I knelt down before her in the attitude of those ardent lovers of whom I was so fond of reading, I had some difficulty in restraining myself from saying 'Beauteous Plum!' 'Blushing Plum!' Blooming Plum!' 'accept my hand, my heart, and my fortune!' the fortune being much smaller than the hand or heart. But I checked the utterance with the professional question—'What kind of boot would you wish, Miss?' It appeared that Balmorals was what she wanted, and she tried three or four ready-made pairs, but they would not do.

"'If you can quite promise me them by next Tuesday,' she said, 'you can make me a pair. But I must have them by then, because I am going out on a visit.'

"I would have promised her anything that she might have asked; and, of course, I promised this. 'But I must take your measure, Miss,' I said; and I sighed to myself; for, while I had been handling her foot, an insane desire had taken possession of me to *tickle* it; and I was afraid when she placed her stockinged foot in my hand for the purpose of being measured, that I should be unable to fight against the strong temptation that was threatening to master me. I daresay you may remember that in Mrs. Jarley's wax-work show there was a figure of Jasper Packlemerton, of atrocious memory, who courted and married fourteen wives, and destroyed them all by tickling the soles of their feet, when they were sleeping in the consciousness of innocence and virtue. He was very properly brought to the scaffold for his crime; and Mrs. Jarley represented his fingers curled as if in the act of tickling. Well, gentlemen, as Miss Plum's foot was confidingly placed in my hand, the thought rushed upon me, shall I ever be a second Jasper Packlemerton? shall I ever be done in wax, in a Chamber of Horrors, with my fingers curled as in the act of tickling? At that moment it seemed to me as though, if I was ever to descend to posterity, that posterity would behold me in that position. As this fancy flashed across my mind, I nearly yielded to my fate: but in a supreme moment, I recovered myself and jumped at a loophole of escape, by saying to Miss Plum, 'I expect the master in directly, miss; perhaps you would wait for him to take your measure?'"

Here Mr. Timothy Tickler paused and took his own measure of whiskey-and-water.

"And what reply did Miss Plum make?" I enquired.

"What reply?" groaned Mr. Tickler, as he tore his hair—theatrically. "Would that she had never replied! would that she had silently stepped out of Mr. Vamper's establishment. It might have changed the whole course of my life. The thought unmans me; but, as the late Mr. Robson used to observe in Villikins, 'A hinterval of ten minutes is allowed for refreshments.'"

And Mr. Timothy Tickler evinced his desire to claim that interval, by again partaking of the refreshment of whiskey-and-water; while I did the same—though not for self and partner—Smith being fully able to hold his own in this particular. After a pause, Mr. Tickler continued his narrative.

CHAPTER III.

THE TICKLER DEVELOPED.

"The reply that Miss Plum made to me," said Mr. Tickler, resuming his story, "was, that she could not wait till Mr. Vamper returned, because she was in a great hurry. 'And I suppose,' she said, 'that you can take my measure?' I could not say No; but, I thought that my doom was sealed. I took the rule and the measuring tape and she slid out her foot towards me: it stole out from beneath her petticoat like the little white mouse in Sir John Suckling's ballad. I knelt down, and, as she lifted it, I reverently took it in my hand; and then, gentlemen, I—— I——"

"You tickled it?" interposed my friend Smith, rushing at a conclusion in the same blundering way that he rushes at his fences in the hunting-field.

"No, sir!" replied Mr. Tickler: "I am proud to say that I did nothing of the kind. I measured it. I resisted the insane desire to tickle it; and all would have been well, if she had not said, 'Are you quite sure that the measure on the rule was right? it seemed to me to be too tight. Would you measure it again?' It seemed as though she was rushing to her doom. She again lifted her stockinged foot and put it towards me; and, as I took it by the one hand and my rule in the other, I lost my reason for a moment, and—the influence of Jasper Packlemerton must have overpowered me—I tickled the sole of her foot."

"Well?" said Smith, becoming interested; while our shabby-genteel play-actor acquaintance paused to take some rapid pulls at his cigar and whiskey-and-water.

"It was anything but well, sir;" replied Mr. Timothy Tickler, "although, for the time, the difficulty was surmounted. Of course, she instantly drew back her foot, while I, recovering a fragment of my intellects, stumbled out an excuse that the little brass upright on the foot-rule had slid down and scraped the sole of her foot. I fancy she was incredulous; but, my explanation lulled her first suspicions, and, therefore, saved me. I said the measure was quite right and she should be sure to have the boots by the time she had named: and, as I spoke in a very quiet and business-like way, I suppose she thought that the tickling was caused as I had said. So, by the time that she had put on her own boot again, she had recovered her composure; and, merely saying "I must not be disappointed;" she left the shop. Fool that I was, not to take warning! but, as no evil had come to me from that first tickling, I was insane enough to suppose that I could repeat the experiment with similar impunity; and hoped, either that a little excuse would serve my turn, or that my ready wit would stand me in good need and serve me in an emergency. But in this I was deceived, as I richly deserved to be."

Here Mr. Tickler paused and sighed; and then sighed and looked—at his glass, and sighed and looked again. The glass was empty. The strolling actor struck into a theatrical attitude, and said, "What, ho! without there! who waits? I would quaff a goblet to my better fortune."

We took the hint; and, when his glass had been replenished, Mr. Timothy Tickler resumed his story.

(To be continued.)

THE PANTIN TRAGEDY.—The trial of Tropmann for the murder of the Kinck family began on Tuesday at Paris. Tropmann persists in saying that Kinck, sen., was concerned with him in the forgery affair, and that Jean Kinck was poisoned by one of their accomplices.

A DIABOLICAL ACT.—On Christmas-eve two field-gates were laid by some miscreants on the line of rails about midway between the Barton-le-Street and Shipley stations. The last train from Malton to the north came upon them full speed, and the engine cut the first gate clean in two, but the second being thicker, was carried a long way by the "guards" in front of the wheels before it was broken up. The train fortunately kept the rails, and only some slight damage was done to the engine.

A MAD DOG AT LARGE.—On Friday considerable consternation was created in the neighbourhood of Nottingham, by a large black retriever dog, which was at large in a rabid state. The animal was first seen at Cinder Hill, where it is said to have killed two other dogs. It was next seen at a place called Arnold, where it bit two men. The animal subsequently attacked several people on the road towards Nottingham; and, although efforts were made to destroy it, it was eventually lost sight of.

DEATH OF THE BISHOP OF MANCHESTER.—The Right Rev. Dr. James Prince Lee, first Bishop of Manchester, died suddenly at Mauldreth Hall on Christmas-eve. The deceased prelate was in his sixty-fifth year. He was educated at St. Paul's School and Trinity College, Cambridge, and was appointed Assistant Master at Rugby, under Dr. Arnold, in 1830, which post he retained until 1838, when he was made Head Master of King Edward's Grammar School, Birmingham. In 1848 he was appointed to the newly-constituted Bishopric of Manchester. Dr. Lee was married in 1830 to the eldest daughter of Mr. George Penrice, who survives him.

SKETCHES IN THE MIDLANDS

BY

DAYLIGHT AND GASLIGHT.

No. III.—The Midlands in Mid-Winter.

> "Heap on more wood, the wind is chill;
> But let it whistle as it will,
> We'll keep our merry Christmas still."

Thus sang the great Sir Walter, who knew better than anybody how the "old-fashioned" Christmases were celebrated in the feudal castle and baronial hall of the Middle Ages—those "good old times" which we are all so fond of quoting to the disparagement of this nineteenth century, but which, believe me, were not half so nice to live in as our own period. Why, bless me, my dear young lady, you need not stare me out of countenance until the whites of your eyes gleam (it is a profane simile, I confess) like the orbs of a duck that has chosen the moment of a thunderstorm as the most fitting occasion for making its exit from this life. Don't tell me, miss—an' I speak not with all politeness and deference, beshrew me—that the Middle Ages were better than the times in which we have the good fortune to live; that at Christmas-tide—well, then, call it by its Druidical, heathen title of "Yule," if so it please you—there were court pageants that would shame the sorry remnants of queenly revelry left for us to lament over; that the King set an example of feasting (I will go bail for it he never fasted in Lent, though) which was followed by all his subjects; that there were such services in abbey and convent as never were before or since; that "'twas merry in hall when beards wagg'd all;" and that (to quote Sir Walter again) "On Christmas Eve the bells were rung; on Christmas Eve the mass was sung," the only season of the Church's year, by-the-bye, when that solemn function was celebrated at night. Don't tell me that those were the "good old times," for I won't hear of it; don't conjure up reminiscences which are so shadowy that they might all be overthrown and demolished in less time than it takes you to say ipecacuanha. Just think for a moment what *we* enjoy, and what our friends of the Middle Ages altogether lacked. I will say nothing of the luxuries of this pre-eminently luxurious age; I should be necessitated to recite to you the contents of a purveyor's list of articles, which would not, I think, be particularly entertaining reading, though the writing were facile of accomplishment. But I will point you to one fact in our nineteenth-century civilization. Look at that hissing, snorting, boiling-over-with-excitement piece of mechanism standing on the main line at New-street railway station this cold December morning; look at it, I ask you, and then tell me if the Middle Ages, with all their cunningly illuminated missals, with all their painted windows and carved corbels, their feastings and their jousts, their revelry by day and by night, their hobby-horses and jesters, their Maid Marians on Plough Monday, their processions at Whitsuntide, their Midsummer sports and games, and their general rollicking way of taking life—tell me, I say, after looking at this railway engine and its train of carriages, if the Middle Ages could boast of anything like the Giant Steam, which we in these degenerate days have captured and tamed and rendered subservient to the will of man?

Thanks to the steam horse which has been the subject of these proemial remarks, I saw with the first blush of dawn on Christmas Day the sun shine on hill, and lane, and sea some couple of hundred miles away. The air on Christmas Eve was so deliciously warm, that as you stood looking out seaward, watching the waves break over the "bar" far out in the bay, and talking to the lifeboatmen, who, themselves, were making ready for Christmas, you could almost have persuaded yourself that Spring had thrust Winter aside, and that the banks in the first lane you came to would be bejewelled with violets and primroses, and cowslips, and daffodils, and lilies of the valley. But ere the Sunday chimes had gone, when the morning was yet very young, I looked out from my window on a snow-clad country—hills, shore, beach, vessels, boats, anchors, all were covered with snow "as with a garment;" and when, on the same afternoon, I peeped out of the railway carriage window, behold! the pools were frozen, the clouds were thick with snow, there was ice on sedgy river banks by which the stream rushed rather than flowed with impetuous haste; and then I saw I was "In the Midlands" again, with no more violets than you can get in Birmingham market, and no more primroses on country banks than there are potatoes on the platform of the Midland railway.

Yes, in the Midlands, and in Mid-winter!

I hope the weather is cold enough for you now; I trust, gentlemen, you who laugh at the artists who draw pictures for the Illustrated Papers in the composition of which frost and snow and Old Father Christmas play an important part,—I trust messieurs, that this is something like the "old-fashioned" Winters that you write so knowingly about; there is snow everywhere many inches deep, the thermometer is several degrees below freezing point; and, in short, I hope you like it.

The snow fell upon country and town alike—upon warehouse and factory, and upon the seldom-silent forges yonder, where the Titans of the Black Country are keeping holiday for a few hours. It fell so fast that those who had been foremost in demanding why we never have any "seasonable weather" are the first to declare that if this sort of thing goes on they won't answer for the consequences; while, as for the postmen and the other officials who select the Twenty-sixth of December as the day for collecting their Christmas boxes, those unfortunate individuals declare, with many a sigh, that it is hopeless for them to think about making their weary round when the streets are so snowy and slippery that even the cab-horses are obliged to give up in despair all attempts at locomotion.

It is Boxing-day (see how cleverly on another page Mr. Fildes has hit off the "gallery" audience on this night of nights); and although you may decidedly refuse to accompany me in my goings and comings through the streets, you may not object to follow me in my gossip.

There is a blinding snowstorm; yet New-street, Birmingham, is thronged with people, who, as an observant chronicler has already mentioned in his diurnal record of the day's amusements, have the faculty, and a happy one it is, of going about in bodies of some five or six. Lonely folk are the exception to-day; and this is as it should always be. For myself, I declare that Christmas so warms my heart that if Old Scrooge, with his shrivelled, worn, pinched face, shivering in his threadbare coat and thin, leaky, shoes, were to accost me in the street at this season and ask me how I found myself, I should clutch him by the arm, and hie off with him to the Great Western Hotel, or the Queen's, or the Hen and Chickens, and insist on regaling him with a bowl of punch, concocted from a recipe left me, with that small sum in the Three per Cents., by my grandfather, a relative, by the way, of whom it is not given to every man to boast. Avuncular relations are common enough; but when it comes to a question of grandfathers, you find out your parvenu friends almost as soon as you can consult the family tree.

Yes, this is a genuine Winter of the olden type. There is no mistake about it. The few omnibuses running this morning—crawling would be more correct—are full of passengers; the windows of the doors are securely fastened down to keep out the snow-flakes, thick enough now to blind you; and the conductor and driver look like Niobe's sons, "all stone." The shops, most of them, are closed, and the busy assistants are keeping Christmas with their friends at a distance, happy in their immunity for three whole days from their irksome and monotonous duties. Where do all the people come from that you see in the streets to-day? Many are townsfolk—veritable "Brummers;" but the majority have come in by rail from Bilston, Willenhall, Dudley, Wolverhampton, Oldbury, and other Black Country towns. Glad enough are they to quit the furnace-fire and smoke, you may be sure, and eager to take part in the festivities of the Midland Capital, where there is plenty to be seen this Boxing Day. Look at that mechanic, with his wife clinging to him, half-frightened at the scene New-street presents at one o'clock in the afternoon, when the Negro musicians are beating-up for patronage. Mark that young couple, newly-married, I am sure, for the wife still wears some of her poor wedding-finery, and the husband displays the same flaming necktie which he wore on the day they were wed at the little country church, the bells of which are now ringing merrily in token of Christmas-tide. Don't omit to notice that group of four rosy-cheeked, white-teethed, well-wrapped-up girls, standing at the corner of Stephenson-place, hesitating whether to patronize the morning performance of "Blue Beard" or "Red Riding Hood," or the spectacular entertainments at the Music Halls, from all of which great things are expected; nor, whilst you are about it, fail to observe those "jolly dogs," walking up New-street, cigars in their mouths, their hats very much on one side, and their whole demeanour that of holiday-makers "on the spree." This gentleman coming over the bridge at the railway station, with bloodshot orbs, hair over his eyes, and generally convivial appearance, has been "keeping it up" rather early in the day. Listen! He is telling the partner of his bosom, who looks fondly at him—such, dear friends, is woman's love!—that he'll be dashed if he goes home till morning, "till d-d-daylight d-sh-appear." I don't envy him the headache he will surely have long before night-fall.

See! the snow has ceased to fall, there is a blue sky, and the sun is making a determined effort to peep out from behind those dull, heavy, leaden-coloured billows of clouds which hang over Birmingham. Hail a hansom, and bid the Jehu drive with all speed homewards. I care not what your plans are, you must let me have my way this time, and "my way" is towards Kirby's Pool, whither troops of skaters are hurrying. Quickly, then! tell John the groom to wipe off the grease in which your skates have been carefully preserved since last winter, light one of those cigars, which your friend the captain of the Jersey boat sent you as a Christmas present, and hey for the ice, ere the thaw sets in, as it most likely will before the Old Year is dead!

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

The ex-Queen of Naples gave birth to a daughter on the 24th ult.

A carman, who was intoxicated, fell off his van at Chelsea on Christmas-day, and was killed.

Lord Torpichen died at his residence, Calder House, near Edinburgh, on Friday.

President Grant has signed the Reconstruction Bill, which is now law, and Congress has adjourned till the 10th of January.

The Bishop of Exeter was enthroned at Exeter Cathedral on Wednesday. He had an enthusiastic reception on his arrival in the city; and after his enthronisation he "preached a vigorous extemporaneous sermon."

Horrible Massacre.—The *Melbourne Argus* says intelligence has been received of a horrible massacre at Fiji. A Mr. Lattin, who, it is said, was formerly a store-keeper in Melbourne, had shipped about 280 natives on board the French barque *Morea*. Their ultimate destiny was, it is believed, Queensland; but it seems that the islanders rose *en masse*, and mercilessly killed every white man on board with the exception of the mate. They then jumped overboard, with the intention of swimming on shore, but only about thirty reached the land, 253 having, it is supposed, been drowned.

The Duchess of Argyll is out of danger.

A new corps, to be called the Army Service, is to be formed.

The personal property in England of the late Mr. Geo. Peabody has been sworn under £400,000.

Mr. Edwin M. Stanton, formerly Secretary of War, died at Washington on Thursday.

Mr. Robert Ganthony has been fined 5s., and 14s. costs, by the Richmond magistrates, for riding on a velocipede on a public footpath.

The insurgents of the Red River have issued a declaration of independence, in which they protest against their transfer to Canada without their consent. They state that they are willing to negotiate with Canada to secure a good Government and assure the prosperity of the people.

The London Poor at Christmas.—The poor in the various metropolitan workhouses were, according to custom, provided on Christmas-day with a dinner of roast beef, plum pudding, and beer. The elder people had also tobacco or snuff given to them, and in some instances toys were given to the children. The official return of the Poor Law Board shows that 36,600 poor people were thus provided with a Christmas dinner. At Bow a dinner was given to 700 poor and destitute children by a committee of residents who had raised the funds by private subscription. The provisions left at the close of the dinner were distributed among poor families in the locality on Monday.

Forgeries on Lord St. Leonards.—Lord St. Leonards writes to say that he and his family have for the last twelve months been much annoyed by false telegrams and false orders being sent in their name to professional men of eminence, and first-class London tradesmen of every description, by which many of them have been put to serious inconvenience. False telegrams and letters have also been sent to absent members of the family. The last of these annoyances was a letter sent to Messrs. Emanuel, asking them to forward seven lockets for his lordship's daughters, the letter being dated from the Athenæum Club.

How the Ritualists kept Christmas.—Always an impressively celebrated festival, Christmas with the ritualists becomes an occasion for the display of all their pageantry. It was to be expected that the day would be most noteworthily kept at St. Alban's, Holborn, and it was so; for at Mr. Mackonochie's church Christmas morning was marked by an elaborate display of flowers and candles on the altar, and a representation of the "Adoration of the Magi," and other pictures were hung in various parts of the chancel. Only six lights were burning on the table, and these were extinguished just before the commencement of the Communion Service. After the consecration of the elements the officiating clergyman raised them until they were on a level with his forehead, and then lowered them again. The three clergymen who took part in this service wore richly embroidered robes with full-length crosses down their backs. Father Walker preached a short sermon from the words "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace goodwill towards men." The *Record* says that an evangelical provincial cleric was expelled the church because he would not take a seat when requested to do so.

The Court: Christmas-tide.—With a commendable and peculiarly English spirit the Queen "keeps Christmas" as it used to be kept in the Royal household. On Christmas-eve the Queen and the Royal Family distributed Christmas gifts to the children of Whippingham School, seventy-eight in number. The gifts were laid out in the servants' hall at Osborne. On Christmas day and Sunday her Majesty attended divine service at Whippingham Church. The Rev. George Prothero preached on each occasion. The Duke of Cambridge, Prince and Princess of Teck, and Princess Claudine of Teck, dined with the Prince and Princess of Wales on Christmas-day. The Prince and Princess of Wales, and Prince Victor and Prince George of Wales, left Marlborough House on Sunday for Holkham, on a visit to the Earl and Countess of Leicester. The infant daughter of the Prince and Princess of Wales was christened at Marlborough House on Friday, by the Bishop of London, assisted by the Dean of Westminster and Sub-Dean of the Chapel Royal. The Infant Princess received the names of Maud Charlotte Mary Victoria.

The Weather.—Winter set in on Christmas-day with a sharp frost; on Sunday there was a heavy fall of snow; and on Monday night a repetition of the snow-storm. In Merionethshire the snow was from two to three feet deep on Sunday; and the fall seems to have been general. Accompanying the snow was a high wind, which caused some disasters at sea. The screw-steamer *Ironsides*, bound from Cardiff to St. Nazaire, is reported a total wreck at the mouth of the Loire. The crew were saved. The *Vigilant*, bound from Cardiff to Hayle, struck on the bar during the severe gale of Thursday, and was expected to go to pieces. The *Industry*, bound for Sunderland, stranded at Holy Island, and has gone to pieces. The schooner *Anna*, of Oldenburg, bound from Galatz for Falmouth, drove ashore on the Lincolnshire coast, and is now covered with water. A vessel has been passed, bottom upwards, about a mile and a half off Brean Down, on the Somersetshire coast, and a quantity of deck and saloon fittings have been washed ashore at Bridlington. The *Lætitia* lifeboat of the National Lifeboat Institution was launched at Lowestoft about one o'clock on Saturday morning to the assistance of a vessel which had gone on the Holm Sand, and was happily successful in bringing ashore the master and crew of nine men from the wreck, which proved to be that of the schooner *Agathe Siheilbert*, of and from Stettin for Bordeaux, with timber. The Ramsgate lifeboat *Bradford*, and steam tug *Aid*, went out to the Goodwin Sands, on Christmas morning, in a strong and squally wind, with heavy falls of snow, and were instrumental, with the help of a steam tug, in getting the ship *Constancia*, of Bremen, off the Sands, and in taking her and her crew of twenty-six men safely into Ramsgate Harbour. The *Quiver* lifeboat, of the National Institution, returned to Margate on Christmas-eve, unable to save a single life from a fine vessel ashore on the Margate Spit. At Tynemouth the stranding of the schooner *Viscount*, from Montrose to Exeter, with the loss of the master and one of the crew is reported.—The severe frost supplied skaters with plenty of amusement until Wednesday, when a thaw set in.

A new Treaty has been signed between England and China.

Further reductions at Chatham dockyard are ordered to be carried out.

The French Ministry have resigned. M. Emile Olliver is to join a new Cabinet.

A papermaker was killed at Trowbridge on Friday, by getting out of a train while it was in motion.

Captain Powell, Governor of the Convict Prison at Chatham, has been appointed Inspector of Prisons, in the place of the late Mr. Voules.

The whole system of inland telegraphs is to be acquired by the Government on the 29th instant. New forms are in preparation.

On the evening of Christmas-day six persons lost their lives by fire in a house in Sandwich-street, Burton-crescent.

A telegram by the cable announces that President Grant has issued an order for the establishment of military rule in Georgia, under General Terry.

Mr. Commissioner Holroyd, who has sat as a Commissioner of Bankruptcy for thirty-eight years, took his seat in Court on Thursday for the last time, and received a complimentary address from the bar.

The expenses incurred in recovering the remains of the late Mr. Thomas Powell, who, with his wife and others, were murdered in Abyssinia last spring, amount to more than £15,000.

The shifting of a bog is reported from Ballylongford, county Kerry. The bog, which covered over 200 acres, moved nearly half a mile inland. Several cabins were thrown down, and cattle and horses were lost. A lake took the place of the bog. The inhabitants on the skirts of the morass barely escaped.

The birthdays of Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Disraeli both occurred this week. Mr. Gladstone was born at Liverpool, December 29, 1809; and his predecessor in office, Mr. Disraeli, was born in London, December 31, 1805.

A Horrible Superstition.—In a recent number of *Cassell's Magazine* we read:—Among our domestic superstitions there was once one touching the powers of the fat of a human being who had been gibbeted, when prepared after a certain form. It is to be hoped that this has completely died away in this country, and probably it has; but there is at least one country, or rather province, under the government of Russia, where the superstition still lingers, as the following occurrence will show. The place where it was enacted was in a forest near a village named Winkowia, in Volhynia. The victim was a child, whose body was found in a frightfully mangled condition. The Russian police succeeded in catching the murderer, and it was then ascertained that the reason of his killing the child was to make use of the fat of the body in manufacturing a candle, in the belief that the possessor of such a candle could become invisible at pleasure. The particular motive for which he desired invisibility was to enable him to carry on his operations of robbing people with greater facility.

Victor Hugo and the Children.—Every Christmas M. Victor Hugo gives a children's party at his residence, Hauteville House, Guernsey. This year several distinguished guests were present, including the Duchess of St. Alban's and Lady Diana Beauclerk. Light refreshments having been served in the drawing room, the company adjourned to another apartment, where M. Victor Hugo delivered a speech, and subsequently distributed the toys from two enormous Christmas trees to the children who had been invited on the occasion. Concluding a characteristic speech, Victor Hugo said: "The child must be our care. And why? Do you know his true name? The child is called the Future. Let us exercise the holy fatherhood of the present on the future. What we shall have done for the child, the future will render a hundredfold. This young spirit—the child—is the field for the future harvest. In raising up the child we elevate the future. To elevate—profound word. In improving this little soul, we make the education of the unknown. If the child be healthy, the future will be well; if the child be virtuous and honourable, the future will be good. Let us enlighten and teach this childhood, which is under our eyes, that the twentieth century will dawn. The torch in infancy is the sun in the future."

Shocking Outrage.—A brutal attempt to destroy the life of a woman has been made at Ewell, in Surrey. A woman named Richardson, who is said to be married, but whose husband has for some years been lying paralyzed in an hospital, lived for some time with a man named Huggett, at Rotherhithe, but recently left him and went to live at Ewell. Huggett found out where she lodged, several times visited her, and more than once threatened her life. The woman Richardson was accustomed to rise about three in the morning to prepare breakfast for a carman named Spooner, who lived in the house. The other morning she got up about her usual time, and on going into a shed at the back of the house for some coals, she found Huggett sitting there with a bag between his knees. She screamed and ran into the house, followed by Huggett, who, after a struggle with the man Spooner, threw the bag, which was filled with gunpowder, on the kitchen fire. A fearful explosion took place, which shattered the house, and the house next door also. Huggett was blown through the partition into the next house, and died a few hours afterwards; Spooner is much burnt about the body, and is in a precarious state; and a railway porter named Smith, who slept on the ground floor, was so much injured by the falling wall that he died in the course of the day. The woman Richardson, and the wife and children of Spooner, escaped unhurt. Huggett admitted before he died that he stole the powder from Clark's powder-mills in the Kingston-road.

Extraordinary Cure of a Cough by Powell's Balsam of Anniseed.—"Her Majesty's Gun Boat, "Netley," Wick, North East Coast of Scotland, 7th September, 1868.—Dear Sir,—Having had a most distressing and severe cough, which caused me many sleepless nights and restless days, I was recommended by his Lordship, the Earl of Caithness, to try your most invaluable Balsam of Anniseed, and I can assure you, with the first dose I found immediate relief, even without having to suspend my various duties; and the first small bottle completely cured me; therefore I have the greatest confidence in fully recommending it to the million. Most respectfully yours, W. Linzel, H.M.G.B. "Netley,"—To Mr. Powell. Powell's Balsam of Anniseed can be had of all Chemists. In Bottles at 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 3d. Warehouse, 16, Blackfriars Road, London. Ask for "Powell's Balsam of Anniseed." [267

NEW YEAR'S MORN.

BY ROBERT B. HOLT.

A hoary head, just twelve months old,
  Lay down last night;
And, 'midst the darkness and the cold,
Which form of Yesterday enfold,
  Break gleams of light.

The bright eyes of an infant year
  Dawn through the gloom;
While tender-fingered Hours draw near,
And, blushing, bid new life appear
  From old Time's tomb.

They dress him in a seemly suit,
  With gems bedight,
Whose fairy web we well impute
To gossip Frost, whose labour mute
  Weaves vesture white.

And on before To-morrow's dance,
  With thoughful glee,
To order, all, men count as chance,
And picture hopes which e'er enhance
  Life's mystery.

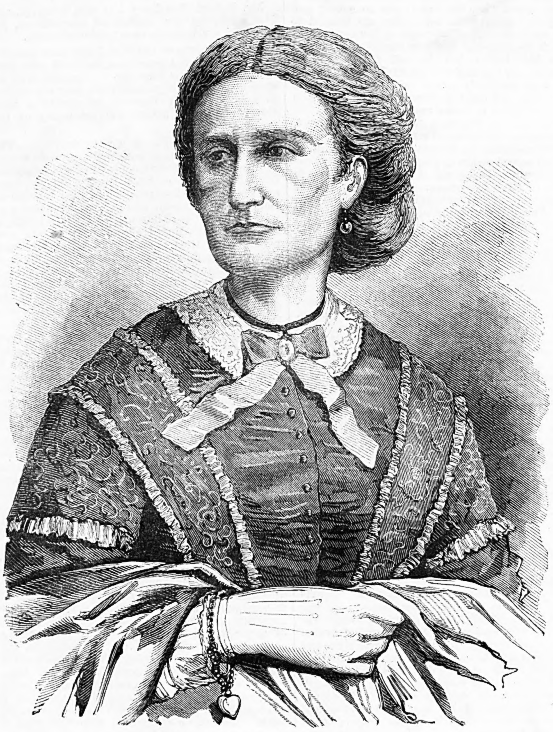
Beyond their bourne there hangs a cloud
  So dark! so deep!
But let us laugh, nor bring Doubt's shroud
Where sinless babe, with light endowed,
  Bids sorrow sleep.

To-day is life! a life we feel—
  God gives us bright—
A child of Peace, whose touch should heal
All venomed wounds, that selfish steel
  Gave brother's right.

THE SUEZ CANAL: GUESTS GOING TO A BALL.

Our series of sketches illustrative of the festivities inaugurated to celebrate the opening of the Canal at Suez draws to a close. We have presented the readers of the *Illustrated Midland News* with pictures of the *fêtes*, which in after years will be a most interesting and valuable record of the events in Egppt during the past two months.

Our Suez sketch in this week's number is an amusing one: it represents the Viceroy's guests going to the ball given by his Royal Highness at Ismaïlia. That place was gorgeously decorated for the occasion, and was one of the chief centres of gaiety. Arab tents and stalls lined the banks of the canal, and the visitor found himself surrounded by a perfect *embarras de riches*. The "Almées" (see a previous Number) danced and sang in the streets, every thoroughfare was crowded with picturesque-looking natives, at night the place was illuminated, and at night, too, everybody went to the ball given by the Viceroy to the guests. The artist has given a humorous picture of the "invites" going to the ball. You may be sure that the gentleman in evening dress, with the eye-glass, never rode to one of Lady Macrush's *matinées* or *soirées* in the fashion he was compelled to adopt at Ismaïlia, viz., on mule-back. The elderly gentleman near that pretty girl, and the cavaliers and their lady-friend in the rear, look as though resolved to put up with any inconvenience that may arise provided they reach the scene of the festivities—a truly English characteristic. Altogether, the affair must have been to English eyes as novel as it was entertaining.



THE LATE DUCHESS D'AUMALE.

THE OVEREND-GURNEY CASE.

The verdict in this case was not given in time for publication last week. In concluding his charge to the jury the Lord Chief Justice, after remarking that the spirit of speculation and gambling had taken deep root in the minds of all classes of the community, said: The question is whether you believe that these gentlemen, knowing this business was worthless, conspired together to pass it off upon the public, and to cheat and defraud the shareholders. If you are satisfied of that, you will convict them; but if the prosecution have failed to satisfy you of that, and if, looking at all the circumstances, you think they acted honestly, then I am sure you will have satisfaction in being able to acquit them, and thus relieve them from their present position, in which the degradation of the accusation is added to all the loss and ruin they have suffered through this great disaster; though on the other hand, if you really think them guilty, no sentiment of compassion must deter you from the discharge of your duty and the verdict which in that case it will be your duty to pronounce.

It took the jury less than ten minutes to find the verdict "Not Guilty," and then ensued a scene in court of a most extraordinary nature. Enthusiastic cheers burst from the large audience, which the Lord Chief Justice and the officers of the court vainly endeavoured to stop. The scene was one of the wildest excitement. The effect of the verdict upon the defendants and their friends was almost electrical. Some started to their feet and shook each other's hands warmly, and uttered exclamations of joy and delight, which, however, were inaudible amid the thunder of those frantic cheers which drowned all other sounds. Some seemed overwhelmed with emotion, and more than one burst into tears. The leading counsel present, the Solicitor General and Sir J. Karslake, had their hands seized and warmly pressed by their grateful clients, and all this being observed by the vast crowd—all upstanding and cheering—only added to the excitement, and elicited still louder bursts of cheering. At last the excitement so far calmed down that the cheers ceased, only to be renewed outside, however, when the defendants appeared; and then they received an ovation strangely contrasting with the howls of execration which were heard at the Mansion House, when, amid much popular excitement, they were committed. Dr. Kenealey's application for the costs of the prosecution were refused. By degrees the defendants and their friends retired, and were received outside with the most hearty cheers, which accompanied them as long as they were recognised. No expense was spared by the defendants. The costs were fully £1,000 a day.

THE LATE DUCHESS D'AUMALE.

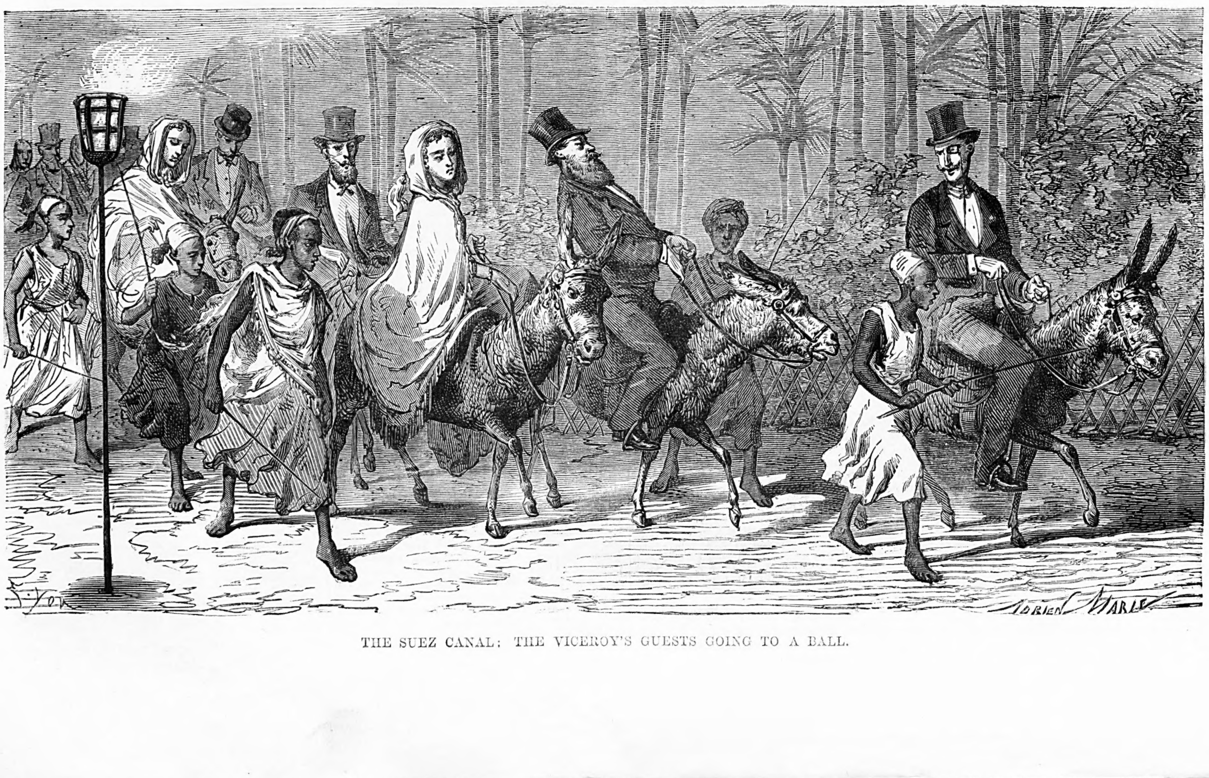
Some particulars of the late illustrious lady whose portrait we engrave this week have already appeared in these pages, and it will be only necessary that they should be briefly recapitulated. Marie Caroline Auguste de Bourbon, Princess of the two Sicilies, was born on April 26, 1822, at Vienna, and married on November 25, 1844, at Naples, Henri d'Orleans, Duc d'Aumale. Her Royal Highness's illness was comparatively brief, and although her death cannot be said to have been altogether unexpected, its suddenness was startling. The funeral, as we have stated, was at the Roman Catholic Chapel, Weybridge, near Twickenham, one of the seats of the Duke, and was attended by the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Cambridge, &c.

On Friday, the 10th ult., the day of the funeral, a service for the dead in memory of the late lamented Duchess was celebrated in the chapel of St. Ferdinand, Rue de la Revolte, Neuilly, in the presence of upwards of 2,000 persons. Among others present were General Changarnier, Vice-Admiral Touchard, Prévost-Paradol, Guillaume, Guizot, Mons, Estancelin, Jules de Lesseps, the Duchesses Galliera, Valence, Decezes, several members of the Rothschild family, also of the de Montesquieu, de Broglie, d'Estissac, de Segur, Montalivet, and Duchatel families. Such adherents and old retainers of the exiled princes as were unable to cross the Channel to offer the homage of their sorrowing sympathy at Twickenham flocked to this rendezvous.

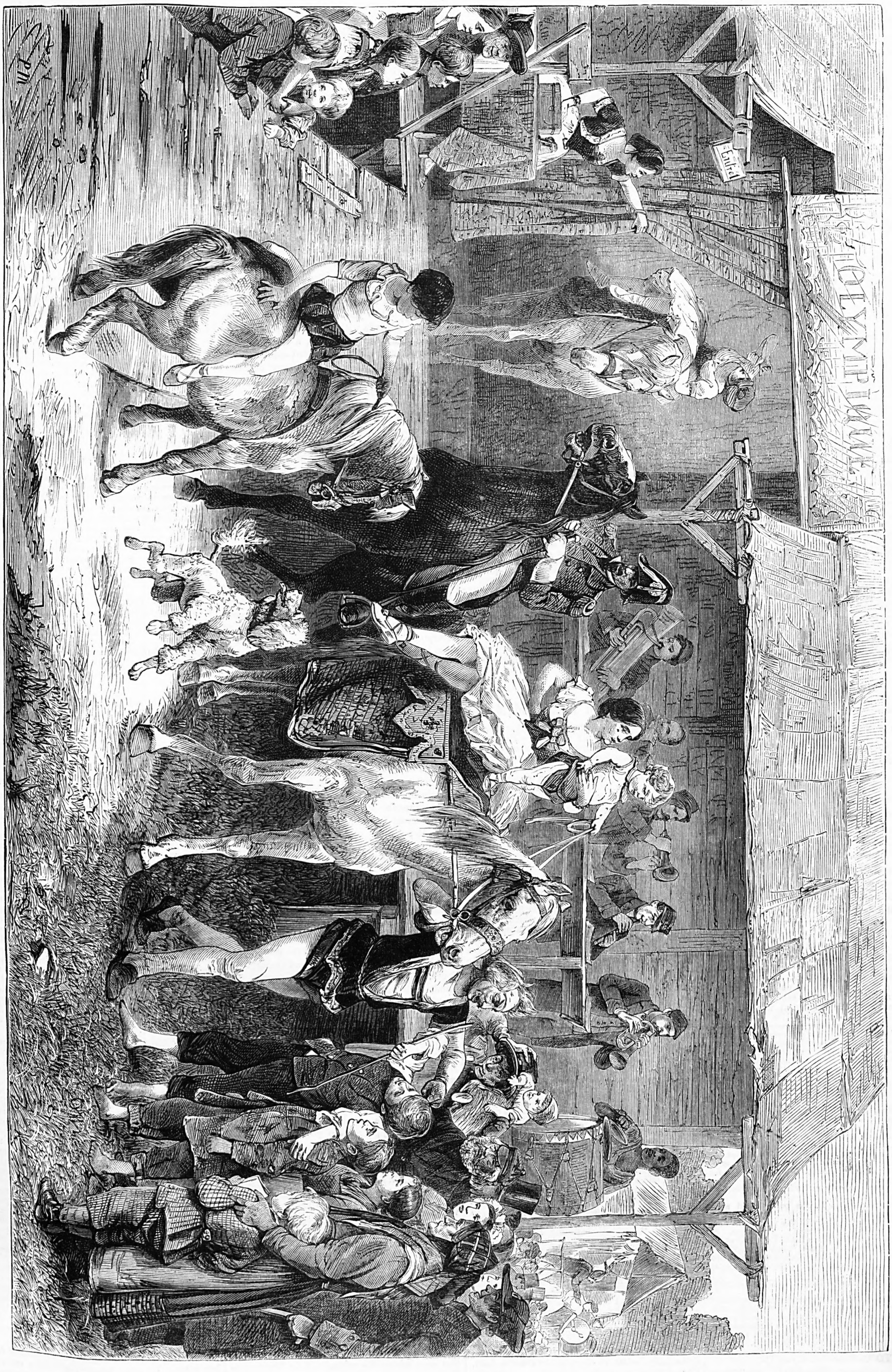
At the last meeting of the Evesham Town Council the following address was adopted:—

"*To His Royal Highness the Duc d'Aumale.*—We, the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the Borough of Evesham in Council assembled, as representing the Borough, respectfully offer to your Royal Highness our sincere expressions of condolence under the great and irreparable loss sustained by you in the death of her Royal Highness the Duchesse d'Aumale, whose unvarying amiability, during her residence in our neighbourhood, has deservedly obtained the respect and esteem of all classes. We earnestly hope that the Almighty may vouchsafe to your Royal Highness and the Duc d'Guise that consolation which He has promised to bestow in hours of trial, and such strength as will enable you to support the heavy affliction with which it has pleased Him to visit you. Given under our common seal at the Guildhall, in the Borough of Evesham, this 15th day of December, 1869.—Wm. Thos. Allard, Mayor."

Music at Weston.—Mendelssohn's oratorio "St. Paul" was very successfully performed at the open night of the Weston-super-Mare Philharmonic Society on December 21st. With the exception of the conductor, the performers, including soloists, were all amateurs. The accompaniments were played upon two grand pianofortes and an harmonium; the parts for wind instruments having been adapted from the full score for the harmonium by the conductor, Mr. Arthur E. Dyer, with excellent effect.



THE SUEZ CANAL: THE VICEROY'S GUESTS GOING TO A BALL.



THE CIRCUS.—*BY PAUL MEYERHEIN.* *(See page 298).*

SPECIAL Advertisements inserted in this column at special rates.

NOTICE.

In consequence of numerous Complaints from private persons and the trade, that the Illustrated Midland News is only to be obtained with difficulty in London, Messrs. Hatton & Co., beg to state that they have OPENED a SPECIAL PUBLISHING OFFICE, at 33, ESSEX STREET, STRAND, under the management of Mr. R. Watson. Henceforth, all the London Agents will be supplied from that office every Friday morning, and the paper can be had there at all times. Country agents may now order through *all the London Agents*, in the same way that they order their London papers. Orders should be given early for the GRAND CHRISTMAS NUMBER, to be published on December 18.

Head Offices: 108, NEW STREET, BIRMINGHAM.

New Volume of Poems. Ready at all Booksellers.

PURPOSE AND PASSION.
By Keningale Cook, B.A.
Fscap. 4to, toned paper, choicely bound, 320 pp. Price 7s. 6d.
London:
VIRTUE & Co., 26, IVY LANE, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C. [489

MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE,
No. 123.
FOR JANUARY,
Price 1s.
Contents of the Number:

1.—"Admiralty Reform."
2.—"A Brave Lady." By the Author of "John Halifax, Gentleman." Chapters XIV. and XV.
3.—M. Sully Prudhomme's "Soupir."
4.—"Lambeth and the Archbishops." By the Hon. Lambeth Librarian. Part III.
5.—Miss Sewell on "Kaiserswerth and the Protestant Deaconesses."
6.—"Boards of Green Cloth." By W. P.
7.—Canon Westcott on "Cathedral Work."
8.—"Estelle Russell." Chapters XLV.—XLVIII.
9.—Mr. C. Knight Watson on "A Cambridge Professor of the Last Generation."
10.—Mr. Thomas Hughes on "The Anarchy of London."
11.—"The Shepherd." By F.
12.—"An English Landlord on the Irish Land Question." By Sir Edward Strachey, Bart.

MACMILLAN & CO., LONDON, [491

NEW SONGS, by E. Land.—LA GITANA (Joyous and Free.) Valse Cavatina. "Brilliant but not difficult, showy and effective, encored nightly," 24 Stamps from Lamborn Cock, 63, New Bond Street. Also, "Whisp'rings from my Angel Love!" Sung by Mr. Vernon Rigby, with immense success, 19 Stamps, from Duncan Davison, 244, Regent Street, and all Musicsellers. [346

Price 6d. (post 7d.); Neat Case 1s. 6d. (post 1s. 8d.); Russia Gilt 2s. 6d. (post 2s. 8d.); exquisitely painted Calf, 3s. (post 3s. 2d).

PRETTY PRESENT.—HOWLETT'S GOLDEN ALMANACK. 32 miniature pages, gold-printed, on rich enamel. No trade advertisements. London: SIMPKIN, Stationers' Court; HOWLETT, 10, Frith Street, and all Booksellers. [294

I WISH HE WOULD MAKE UP HIS MIND, MA.—Post free nineteen stamps. This little simple and easy ballad will be found quite a boon in the drawing-room by thousands of young ladies.—Chantrey & Co., Publishers, Hanley, Staffordshire. [164

SAD BROWN LEAVES. a charming autumn ballad, post free for 16 stamps, also arranged as a vocal duet, 19 stamps. Exceedingly easy to play and sing, and must become very popular.—Chantry & Co., publishers, Hanley, STAFFORDSHIRE. [165

"A perfect ballad."—Bath Chronicle.

WHO'LL BUY, SWEET VIOLETS?
Words by Edward Legge; Music by A. J. Caldicott
London: C. CZERNY, Regent Street, and of all musicsellers. [116

W. T. BELCHER, Mus. Bac., Oxon, Fell. Coll. Org., Professor of the Organ, Pianoforte, Singing, and the Theory of Music, 3, Hampstead Road, and at 23, Worcester Street, Birmingham. [24

OXYGEN IS LIFE.

SEE "Oxygen, Nature's Remedy in Disease." Sent Free for Four Stamps, by G. Barth, 26, Duke Street, Bloomsbury, W.C. Reference kindly permitted to several recent cases. [206

NOTICE.

The Illustrated Midland News in Paris and on the Continent.

This paper may now be purchased in Paris at 50 centimes (about 5d.) at the Kiosks, and at the bookstalls on all the French Railways.

M. de Bernardy, 8, Place de la Madeléine, is the Wholesale Agent in Paris; and will supply the paper to regular subscribers in France, Spain Italy, and Switzerland.

TO AGENTS AND ADVERTISERS.

The sale of the *Illustrated Midland News* is increasing largely. The permanent character of the publication makes it a most desirable medium for Advertisements. As we can only devote a limited space to public announcements, advertisers should send their orders not later than Wednesday at noon in each week.

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⁂ Several correspondents complain that they cannot get our paper at Euston Square Station and some other distant places. We endeavour to meet these difficulties as they arise. We would suggest to our correspondents that a quarterly subscription of 4s. 6d. will secure to them a copy regularly posted on Friday night.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

⁂ We have been compelled to hold over our "Sports and Pastimes" and "Science and Industry" articles.

The Illustrated Midland News
BIRMINGHAM, JAN. 1, 1870.

The accident at the New Theatre, Bristol, on Boxing-night, is the saddest Christmas story that has been told for years. Hundreds of people were crowding down a steep declivity leading to the theatre, and when the doors were opened there was a rush for ingress. A woman fell, and was trampled under foot; almost directly afterwards other persons were thrown down, and the crowd, still surging violently forward, literally trampled eighteen people to death. To make matters worse, in the height of the confusion a policeman gave an alarm of fire, which increased the panic. The scene that ensued is indescribable. The victims were taken into the refreshment-room of the theatre, and while Fairies and Sprites and Clown and Pantaloon were making the house ring with applause and merriment, outside the walls relatives and friends were seeking to identify the dead!

"What will Government do for the Volunteers?" is a question that has often been asked. Mr. Cardwell has just answered it to a certain extent. The right honourable gentleman, at a conference with artillery and engineer volunteer officers last week, explained the Government intentions so far as the Volunteers' future allowances and requirements are concerned. Light field artillery will not be encouraged, but it is hoped the meetings of the National Artillery Association at Shoeburyness will be more substantially supported. Rifle Volunteers are immediately interested in the proposals of the Secretary for War, who suggests the following amongst other alterations:—

> First, it is proposed to reorganise the force so as to bring it into closer connection with the regular army; to put it under the command of the district generals, but not to interfere with the functions of the lords-lieutenant. Secondly, the grant is only to be expended on "necessaries," and the old system of payment by the adjutants, and the vouching every item of expenditure, will be reverted to. Under the head of necessaries will be classed—1. Expenses of head-quarters. 2. Care and repair of arms. 3. Shooting ranges. 4. Travelling to and from ranges and parades. 5. Allowance to buglers. 6. Expense of uniforms and accoutrements.

There are also some proposed new regulations affecting attendance at drills and parades; and officers are to pass an examination or attach themselves for a month to a line regiment or to the militia.

BIRMINGHAM PANTOMIMES.

Birmingham playgoers have "much to be thankful for," especially during the Pantomime season, when the managers of both Theatres make superhuman exertions to secure the approbation of their patrons. Of the Christmas pieces produced on Boxing-day too much cannot be said. At the Royal Mr. Simpson introduced us to our old friend Bluebeard, the story of which was tolerably closely adhered to by Mr. Millward, the author. The burlesque opening is supported by Mr. Terriott (Bluebeard), Mr. Wyke Moore (Shacabac), Mr. Arthur Williams (Anne), Mr. John Barton (Ibrahim), Mesdames Cicely Nott (Selim), Annie Graham (Titania), Clara Thorne (Oberon), Agnes Darling (Fatima), E. Melsom (Abdallah), &c., who do all possible justice to the piece. Without following the pantomime from beginning to end, one or two scenes call for special comment. These include the first picture, representing a fairy grotto, in which a very charming ballet is introduced; a wonderfully picturesque procession, in which ostriches, niggers, pretty girls, barbarians, smaller ditto got up *à la Comprachico*, and an elephant, compete for our admiration, and make up a stage picture of rare excellence; and the transformation scene, which is one of the prettiest we remember to have seen in the provinces. It is called "A Midsummer Night's Dream;" and as it is slowly elaborated the cunning of the scene-painter's art is fully exemplified. A lake, whose silvery waters you see, but do not hear, ripples in the centre of the stage; from a very forest of tangled leaves and flowers emerge fairies, whose costume dazzles the beholder with its glittering brilliancy; and upon flower and fern, and tangled brake and water, are cast the rays of the lime-light in many and constantly-changing hues. Mr. Tom Thompson is the artist, to whom is due the credit of producing a stage-picture of remarkable chasteness in conception and beauty of execution. For the harlequinade the services of Miss Lucille (Columbine), Mr. Charles Bertram (Harlequin), Mr. J. Staunton (Pantaloon), Mr. A. F. Forrest (Clown), and two boys, sons of the latter, who appear as Sprites, and with their father give a wonderfully-clever violin and musical-bell performance.

Mr. Rodgers must be credited with the production of the children's pantomime. *Palmam qui meruit ferat.* The Prince of Wales's pantomime is entitled "Little Red Riding Hood," and its author is Mr. Charles Daly. The manager has done wisely in selecting a story known and loved so well by the children, who follow, with all the intensity that child-minds possess, the varying fortunes of the little lady with the scarlet cloak. The idea of the old story-teller is so admirably carried out at the Prince of Wales's; there is such a profusion of splendid dresses and beautiful scenery; the transformation scene is so marvellous in its wonderful effects; that all parents ought to take their little ones to see "Red Riding Hood," and the pranks of Columbine (Miss Lilly Davis), Harlequin (Mr. Charles Ash), Pantaloon (Mr. Smith), and Clown (Mr. H. Hemming).

NOTES ON THE JOURNALS.

Although Dr. Temple has been consecrated, and enthroned, it is confidently proclaimed in the Tory High-Church paper *John Bull* that there is little, if any, chance of the opposition to the new Bishop ceasing. Many persons affect to doubt the "canonicity of his consecration," and the validity of the orders which the Bishop may confer. His right to a seat in Convocation will be questioned; and our contemporary believes "that lapse of time can make Dr. Temple a rightful bishop, according to Church principles and Church law; but that nothing but a public and solemn retractation of the Essays will enable orthodox Bishops to hold communion with him."

Most persons appreciate those unwieldy metal appliances which attentive railway porters see that you get ere starting on a long journey. In the cold weather a foot-warmer is a real luxury, for which no one minds "tipping." But why should second and third-class passengers be without foot, or, as would be more correct grammatically, feet-warmers? A lady may by chance get one occasionally put into a second-class carriage, but as a rule only those who can afford to ride first-class may travel with warm feet. One M. Berchan has just been presented by the Empress of Russia with a brilliant ring in appreciation of his having warmed a whole train of carriages with his newly-invented apparatus free of expense. Could not our railway managers obtain this invaluable invention, and apply it to carriages of all classes?

Who has not spent an evening at the famous supper-room in Covent-garden? The favourite resort alike of Londoners and country gentlemen, "Evans's," under its excellent manager, Mr. John Green, is the only place of the kind in the metropolis where gentlemen may enjoy themselves without being annoyed. The place is so well conducted that it ought to be exempt from anything in the shape of malicious prosecutions; but the police must have something to do, and they have been at the pains of summoning Mr. Green for keeping his house open during the hours prohibited by law. The proprietor's defence was that the case was an exceptional one, and occurred during the Cattle Show week, and Sir Thomas Henry very properly dismissed the summons, "Evans's" is such a convenience to everybody that we feel sure the magisterial decision will gratify all the frequenters of the place which Thackeray and Sala have so admirably sketched—the former in "Pendennis," the latter in his picturesque "Twice Round the Clock" sketches.

Freedom of the Press is all very well, and we hope we appreciate it to the very fullest extent, but we do not like to see liberty degenerate into license, as is often the case in Paris. A Parisian journalist recently compared the Emperor to the Pantin murderer Tropmann; and now we have the irrepressible Rochefort grossly insulting both Emperor and Empress. In his new journal this Red Republican writer announces that the Empress has brought home from abroad a monkey, and expresses the hope—monkeys being imitative—that the Empress's other monkey (a covert allusion to either the Emperor or the Prince Imperial—probably the former) will not attempt a *coup d'état!* Rochefort also calls upon all patriots to subscribe towards the discharge of a bill which "Prince Lucien Bonaparte" left unpaid abroad; and offers to head the subscription list! What should we do if we had amongst our journalists men of the Rochefort type? We think their lampooning would be soon stopped. But English journalists are, for the most part, we hope, like Brutus, "honourable men," and would rather cut off their right hand than pen such paragraphs as Rochefort's.

Without going quite the length of a *Pall Mall* writer, who thinks before capital punishment is abolished it would be as well to hang one or two druggists, we confess that the practice adopted by the members of that profession of indiscriminately supplying the poor with narcotic medicines for their children is most reprehensible. Two cases are reported this week in which, without much doubt, chemists are morally responsible for the death of two infants. In one case the child being "ill and sleepless," the mother gave it a "sleeping-draught," which was so effectual that her babe never woke again; and at the inquest, acting upon the evidence of a surgeon, the jury found that the child had died from "congestion of the brain, accelerated from an over-dose of narcotic poison." The other victim, a child "afflicted with a cough," lived at Warrington; the mother was told by a druggist to give the infant "twelve drops three or four times a day" of some "stuff" in a bottle. The "stuff" killed the child; but, although it was quite possible, according to the coroner, that the child had been over-dosed, an open verdict was returned. We agree with the coroner's exclamation of surprise that druggists have not better sense than to trust poor people with poisonous medicines to be taken in "drops;" and we hope that next session the subject will be discussed in Parliament with a view to restricting druggists in the sale of these poisonous baby-medicines.

THE HOUSEHOLD.

Bakewell Pudding.—I tried your receipt for this delicious pudding and pronounce it excellent, though I think it is essential that strawberry jam and that only should be used.—Yours, Housekeeper.

Grantham Gingerbread.—1lb. of flour, 1lb. pounded loaf sugar, 1oz. ground ginger, 5oz. of butter, ¼oz. of volatile salts, 12 drops of essence of lemon, mixed with 2 eggs. Baked in a slow oven. This is "E. L. M.'s" receipt in *The Queen*.

Sponge.—A correspondent says she has proved the following to be an excellent means of preserving sponges in proper condition for years. A sponge should never be wrung, as this breaks the fibres, and injures its elasticity; squeeze it as dry as possible, and hang it by a string to dry in the air. Leaving it soapy soon spoils a sponge. When used with soap, it should be squeezed well with warm water, and left to lie a few minutes in cold.

Shetland Shawl.—Real Shetland shawls are always knitted, never crocheted. It requires some patience, and one ought to be a good knitter to undertake a Shetland shawl, as the rows are very long, and any mistake of course sets the whole wrong. The Shetland wool is 1s. per ounce, and at least half a pound would be required for a full-sized shawl. The price of a Shetland shawl is from 35s. to two guineas.

Brandy Snap.—1lb. of butter, 1lb. of flour, ¾lb. of treacle, 1lb. of moist sugar, 2oz. of ground ginger. Mix butter, treacle, and sugar well together, then add the flour and ginger; when well mixed drop into small pieces upon baking tins. Let it be well baked without browning, and rolled when taken off the tins; to be kept in a dry place.

Cheese Biscuits.—These are becoming very favourite biscuits at middle-class as well as aristocratic tables. They are made as follows:—Two ounces of cheese grated fine, two ounces of butter, two ounces of flour, quarter of a teaspoonful of cayenne, mixed into a smooth paste, rolled into a thin cake, and cut into finger lengths, or any form you like. Bake them lightly, and send to table hot. If the biscuits are put into a tin canister they will keep a long time, and can be heated when wanted for use.

To Roast Hare.—Skin it, and soak in plenty of cold water for two hours, then lay it in vinegar for two hours, and afterwards wash it well in cold water. Put the stuffing into the paunch, sew it up, and truss; then put down before a clear fire, and baste well with ale for a quarter of an hour, then with milk for half an hour, and afterwards with butter. Notch the neck in two or three places with a knife. Dredge well with flour, baste to a nice froth; serve with plain gravy in the dish, and currant jelly separate, or poivrade sauce.

To Grill Chicken.—Take the remains of cold fowls, and skin them or not, at choice; pepper and salt them, sprinkle over them a liitle lemon-juice, and let them stand an hour; wipe them dry, dip them into clarified butter, and then into fine bread-crumbs, and broil gently over a clear fire. A little finely minced lean of ham or grated lemon peel, with a seasoning of cayenne, salt, and mace, mixed with the crumbs, will vary this dish agreeably. When fried instead of broiled, the fowls may be dipped into yolk of egg instead of butter.

To Dress Cold Turkey, Goose, Fowl, Duck, Pigeon, or Rabbit.—Cut them in quarters, beat up an egg or two (according to the quantity you dress) with a little grated nutmeg, and pepper and salt, some parsley minced fine, and a few crumbs of bread; mix these well together, and cover the fowl, &c., with this batter: broil them, or put them in a Dutch oven, or have ready some dripping hot in a pan, in which fry them a light brown colour; thicken a little gravy with some flour, put a large spoonful of ketchup to it, lay the fry in a dish, and pour the sauce round it; garnish with slices of lemon and toasted bread.

A Pretty Dress.—The lady who writes "How we live in London," in *The Queen*, says:—There were some very pretty dresses worn at a juvenile party I attended the other evening. One dress was almost a costume, but still very lady-like. It was black velvet, looped up over a rose-colour quilted satin petticoat; the bodice was square-cut, and richly ornamented with modern point lace; the half sleeves had bow of rose ribbon and frills of lace. The epaulettes were composed of frills of rose satin standing up, covered also with lace. An apron of black velvet was worn, trimmed with point lace at least eight inches wide; the apron itself was very narrow, and rather long. The ornaments worn were filigree silver, and a bow of rose colour on the left side of the head.

A New Amusement.—The lady whom we have just quoted says: To supplement the Christmas tree some neighbours of mine have organised an entertainment for the poor children, which consists of what in Germany is called "Schattenspeil" or shadow pantomime. This involves no expense—only a little arrangement. The curtain can be formed of two or three sheets sewn together. Care must be taken that the light is placed at such an angle that the persons performing appear life-size. A man in front of the curtain, who reads well, is to narrate some mountain adventure, which may be admirably illlstrated by the shadows. There are many poems in the language which describe incidents that may be treated in the same way. It is very easy to make up objects whose shadows will pass for boats, Alpine peaks, or such like. All sorts of humorous things can be done. Figures jump over the lights, become gigantic, and disappear in the upper air; men have their heads cut off, and cats and dogs are drawn out of their necks; while the most ludicrous tumbles delight the spectators. The kitchen clothes horse covered with a sheet, with a cardboard turret, forms an excellent tower or castle; an Alpine jäger's dress makes excellent outlines—the alpenstock should not be omitted where he is represented climbing. This kind of entertainment is no novelty to the children of the rich, but to the *poor* little ones it will be as good as a play.

To Correspondents.—"Celia" is thanked for her letter. We shall be glad to receive correspondence for this column from any of our lady subscribers.

NEWS OF THE MIDLANDS.

Mr. S. B. Bristowe, of the Midland Circuit, has been appointed Recorder of Newark.

The Magnetic Telegraph Company have connected their wires with Wednesfield post-office.

An unfounded rumour has been circulated that the proprietor of Day's Music Hall was dead.

John Newton was found dead in the canal near Swan Village, Prince's End, on Christmas Day. He had threatened to destroy himself.

Finchley Christmas steeplechases have been postponed until Tuesday and Wednesday week owing to the frost.

Mr. Charles Dickens will distribute the prizes and certificates at the Birmingham and Midland Institute on the 6th inst.

The Wolverhampton magistrates have committed for trial two men named Taylor and Bickley for stealing a sheep belonging to Mr. Keay, a butcher at Essington.

John Westwood, aged 18, of Wednesbury, died on Monday from the effects of injuries received by some coal falling on him in Bentley pit, belonging to the Darlaston Iron and Steel Company.

Failure in the Iron Trade.—Mr. Richard Free, solicitor, 15, Temple Row, Birmingham, filed a petition in the Bankruptcy Court, on Thursday, on behalf of Mr. Charles Clarke, Upper Arley, Hednesford, and Smethwick, iron merchant and contractor. The liabilities are estimated at from £8,000 to £10,000, and the assets at £5,000, consisting principally of property in the hands of creditors.

A Fatal Ice Adventure.—A youth named Matthew Bailey has fallen a victim to his love of adventure. On Saturday he attempted to cross a pool at Burslem called the "Keep-off," which was frozen over. He told some companions that he would cross or be drowned in the attempt. As the youth was crossing the pool the ice cracked ominously, but he ventured along. The ice broke beneath his weight; there was no possibility of rescue, and the rash, unfortunate boy sank and was drowned.

Induction of a Clergyman at Hanley.—On Monday the Bishop of Lichfield attended at St. John's Church, Hanley, to induct the Rev. C. W. Bond to the incumbency. His lordship was accompanied by the Bishop of Wellington (Dr. Abrahams), who read evening prayer and the special lessons. Afterwards the Bishop of Lichfield, in a brief address, exhorted the congregation to support their new pastor by their prayers and by their loving assistance in all works wherein they could aid him. The formal induction was then proceeded with.

Thieves at Work.—With the cold weather robberies appear to have come in at Birmingham. On Sunday night the house of William Welch, 8, Belgrave-road, was entered during the absence of the family by means of forcing one of the windows at the back, and the following property was stolen:—A gold ring, set with three diamonds, six pearls, two gold studs set with Maltese stones, one set of studs with purple stones, four sovereigns, a silver Geneva watch, and a valuable lot of plated articles. On the same night the house of William Hadduck, greengrocer, Constitution-hill, was broken into, and £70 in gold and silver money, &c., stolen. The robbery was effected by springing a shutter in the shop window facing the street. The family were absent from home when the robbery was committed.

The Murder near Wallingford.—Both the men suspected of being concerned in the murder of Richard Green (Richard Pithey and Vandyke Polley) have been released from custody for want of evidence. Polley was set at liberty on Monday morning, but Pithey was kept in confinement at Oxford Castle till Thursday, when he was taken before a full bench of magistrates at Watlington, and discharged. Mr. J. T. Dodd, of Wallingford, appeared for the prisoner, and on the assembling of the Court asked to be allowed to see the depositions taken against Pither on the previous Saturday. It was stated, however, that the prisoner would be discharged, and that they would not therefore be required. For the satisfaction of the Bench Mr. Dodd produced the whip the prisoner had with him on the night of the murder, and showed how impossible it would be to inflict the injuries the deceased had sustained with so frail a weapon. The failure of the police to discover the murderer excites an immense sensation in the neighbourhood, and a reward of £100 has been offered by the county authorities.

Shocking Catastrophe at a Bristol Theatre.—Eighteen Persons Killed!—A terrible and appalling disaster is reported from Bristol. On Boxing-night a large number of persons crowded the narrow and steep passage of the new Theatre Royal, Park-row, to see the pantomime. By six o'clock the gangway leading to the pit and gallery was crowded by hundreds of persons, while in the roadway were very many others. About seven o'clock, just before the doors were opened, a cry of fire was raised; but whether this cry, or the opening of the doors, led to the tragedy, is not known. At any rate, immediately the doors were unbarred, there was a rush towards them. One poor woman was the first to fall. The obstruction caused large numbers of others, who were pushing in, to fall on her; and in the result nearly thirty men, women, and young people tumbled over one another in a heap, over which those behind still pushed to obtain admission. When the panic was over, attention was paid to those on the ground, and twenty-three persons were taken up insensible. Fourteen of those undermost were found to be quite dead, and they were taken into the refreshment room, and laid out; the remainder were conveyed to the Infirmary, where, up to twelve o'clock at night, four others had died, making eighteen deaths in all. Six are women, four men, and four boys and girls. The performance of the pantomime was continued to the end, and the fun inside, while fourteen dead bodies lay close by, had a hideous aspect. Dread of further mishap prevented the manager stopping the performance. When the play was over, and hundreds inside knew the real facts, the scenes outside the Theatre and Infirmary were perfectly appalling. All the killed have been identified. The inquest was opened on Tuesday and adjourned till Thursday.

Sir John Pakington has taken shares in the Worcester College for the blind sons of gentlemen.

A young labouring man is in custody at Wolverhampton charged with a most brutal assault on a girl who had met him at a public ball.

On Monday and Tuesday 3,626 persons, mostly artizans, visited the exhibition of the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists.

Skating, which had been practised in Birmingham on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, was stopped on the latter day by the thaw.

Foot-and-mouth disease has appeared on two more farms near Bromsgrove, both of which have been declared infected, and subject to the regulations issued by the Central Committee at Worcester.

The Belgian Consul.—We understand that the King of the Belgians has appointed Mr. Charles Budde as Consul of Belgium in Birmingham and the Midland Counties, and that the Consulate continues to be held at the Kingston Metal Works, in Adderley-street.—*Iron Trade Circular (Rylands')*.

Birmingham Sewage Statistics.—In Birmingham there is a population of 360,000. The area sewered is 7,320 acres. The cross-sectional dimensions of the outfall sewers, being two egg-shaped mains, are 5 ft. 9 in., and 4 ft. The dry weather volume of sewage per day is 17,000,000 gallons. The area of land used for the outfall works and space for deposit is 12 acres. The dimensions of each of the depositing tanks which are used is 330 ft. by 90 ft., each averaging 6 ft. deep.

A Drunkard's Death.—Thomas Ward, of Moorgate, Retford, who had been a hard drinker for years, went into a neighbour's house on Sunday afternoon and sent for a quart or two of ale to a public-house, with which some rum was mixed; having partaken of it, he lay down on the sofa, when he was seized with an apoplectic fit and died before medical aid arrived. An inquest was held, and a verdict of "Died from apoplexy caused by excessive drinking" was returned.

Murderous Attack on a Bridegroom.—A strange affair took place at Dudley on Christmas night. Henry Hunt had been married on Saturday to a young woman living at "The Dock," a limestone worker named Henry Tandy being the bridegroom's best man. The custom of dwelling apart seems to prevail at Dudley, and at night Hunt went home with Tandy to the former's lodgings. At supper Tandy brandished his knife in Hunt's face, and then twice drew the knife across the latter's throat, almost laying the windpipe bare. Jealousy is supposed to have induced Tandy to make the attack. Tandy, who ran away, has not yet been apprehended.

New Peal of Bells at Worcester Cathedral.—The Cathedral Church of Worcester has at length been supplied with a new peal of bells, the cost of which is to be defrayed by public subscription, about £3,000 having been raised. The new peal, lately founded at Loughborough, has just been brought to Worcester, and the bells are now deposited in the north transept preparatory to their elevation to their future destination, the tower of the Cathedral. The bells are 13 in number; 12 will ring in peal, and the 13th is the semi-tone bell required for the Westminster chimes. Their tone is very fine, and they are spoken of as being surpassed by no peal of bells in England. They vary in weight from 6¾ cwts. 19 lbs. to 50 cwts. They are named after the twelve Apostles, the great bell being named St. Peter. Each bell is ornamented with a band of Gothic work, and the name of the Apostle after whom each bell is named is inscribed on the waist of the bell in letters of the 15th century. The total weight of the bells is 221¾ cwts. 22 lbs. When the bells are hung it is proposed to have a dedication service to inaugurate the peal. To the Rev. R. Cattley, one of the Minor Canons, is due the credit attaching to the bells scheme, which will be rendered complete when a clock is erected.

Commercial Travellers' Benevolent Institution.—The Mayor of Birmingham (Mr. Prime) took the chair on Tuesday at the annual dinner of the members of this excellent institution, held at the Exchange Hall, Birmingham, which was beautifully decorated. About 130 gentlemen were present. The principal speaker was Mr. George Dawson, who, in proposing the toast of the evening, said, being a dabbler in political and social science, he looked upon commercial travellers with great respect, because they had achieved a great success in the establishment of the "commercial room," with its established tariff and laws, and its noble Republicanism. He had not had time to look into the question whether the commercial room had been the slow growth of successive generations, or was originated by a genius in the commercial "line;" but there were few things in this country which showed more practical sense, such a wise understanding of equality, such liberty without any license, such a thorough understanding of citizenship. There were few things he had seen in his travels equal to the commercial room. Into that room he had no right to enter, unless he should urge some such plea as that he travelled in the paper-staining line; but he had often been invited into it, always met with good fellowship there, and had generally been dismissed in a much happier state of mind than if he had sulked in the gloomy splendour of the coffee-room, or the selfish sullenness of a private room. He had been chairman of a commercial dinner in Scotland, and he need scarcely say that the commercial traveller there was a much solemner person than the commercial traveller in England. To preside over a dinner of ten Scotch travellers, before the toddy went round, was an undertaking for any man, and he was very proud of having come out of it with flying colours. But the commercial travellers had secured for themselves in every inn in the country, in the commercial room, a fixed tariff and certain laws, which were never, or very rarely broken; and, in doing this, they had solved for themselves one of the great problems of Europe. For what was all the political strife about? Simply that lads newly entered into life should have their places at the table without scramble and without stint. Other speeches were delivered. In a future number we shall give an illustration of the room at the time of the banquet.

On Sunday, Lauri Collins fell dead in the Merridale-road, Wolverhampton, whilst returning from the funeral of a relative, which he had attended as a bearer.

The appointment of dispenser to the Worcestershire Infirmary has been filled up *pro tem.* by the election of Mr. F. C. Palmer, son of Mr. F. P. Palmer, surgeon, Walsall.

The Slave Troupe.—At Curzon Hall, Birmingham, there is a band of minstrels called "The Slave Troupe." The entertainment is very amusing, and those who like "nigger" minstrelsy may be sure of two hours' enjoyment. The troupe will perform at Curzon Hall for several weeks.

Mr. W. B. Gurdon, writing for the Premier, has informed the West Bromwich Board of Guardians that the subject of licensing "is receiving the attentive consideration of her Majesty's Ministers."

Formation of a Brotherhood in Staffordshire.—The success of Mr. Benson's Brotherhood, at Cowley, has led to the formation of another similar society. It is to be located at Stoke, in Staffordshire, and at the head of it will be the Rev. Luke Rivington, son of the well-known Church publisher, and until now a curate and the principal preacher at All Saints', Margaret-street. The society will be called the Brotherhood of the Holy Ghost, and will be essentially a preaching order.—*Northern Express.*

LAW AND POLICE COURTS.

KEEPING IT UP!

On Monday some of the metropolitan magistrates had a busy morning's work in disposing of charges arising out of the Christmas festivities. At the Clerkenwell police-court there were forty-seven charges—chiefly for drunkenness, disorderly conduct, and assaults. At Westminster there were thirty charges of a similar character.

WELL SENTENCED.

The barbarous outrages on women, which occur with dreadful frequency, can only be stopped by severe penalties when the accused person is found guilty. At the recently held Nottingham Assizes, five colliers, four of them being brothers, their ages ranging from nineteen to twenty-five, were tried for an outrage on a woman, under circumstances that can be paralleled only by a similar occurrence at Sedgley ten years since. They were found guilty, and were sentenced to ten years' penal servitude.

ALUM IN BREAD.

Bakers who use alum in making their bread should take a caution from a decision just given by the Nottingham Bench, who have fined a baker £5 for selling flour which proved to be adulterated with alum. The defence was that the flour came from America, and that if it contained alum the defendant was innocent of all knowledge of the adulteration. The town clerk, who prosecuted, replied that the law "considered that a baker knew what he was selling and dealing in"—a view in which the bench appear to have concurred.

A LAZY HUSBAND.

At the Marylebone Police Court, Mrs. Rose Fuller, whose maiden name was Leclercq, an actress, applied for an order of protection. The applicant stated that her husband was convicted at the Middlesex sessions of obtaining money under false pretences, and sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment. Immediately on his release he requested her to return to him. This she refused to do on the ground that he had treated her with cruelty, and he had since lived apart from her. Mrs. Fuller also stated that from the time of their marriage she had contributed to support not only herself, but also her husband and child. She had not received anything for her support from her husband, and, in consequence of her refusing to let him have £25, which he demanded, he had lately given notice to Mr. Webster, the manager of the Adelphi Theatre, not to pay over to her any salary which might be due to her. The order was granted.

THE STRIKE AT THE BIRMINGHAM GAS WORKS.

The dispute at the Birmingham Gas Works, reported in last week's Illustrated Paper, formed the subject of an enquiry at the Police Court on Thursday, when George Argyle, labourer, was summoned for assaulting George Barber, labourer, in the employment of Mr. W. Sidwell, whose men had been called in to do the work of the discontented men. Complainant was knocked down by the defendant; others threatened to kill him. Fined 60s. and costs, or two months' imprisonment. Mr. Fallows appeared for complainant. John Harrod, stoker, John Oswin, stoker, and Henry Pitt, stoker, were charged with neglecting their work. Mr. Evans appeared for the prosecution. The defendants were in the employment of the Birmingham and Staffordshire Gas Company as stokers, and the Company claimed 10s. damage, through the defendants illegally leaving their employment. The defendants had broken their agreement, but as they had since returned to their work, the directors felt that they might withdraw the summonses, not asking the men to pay the costs. Mr. Kynnersley said the defendants had behaved in a manner that might have put the Borough to a very great inconvenience. They had been treated with great kindness, and he hoped they were sensible of it.

LOVING ABOVE HIM!

Most of us are aware by the time we have arrived at adolescence that "the course of true love never did," and never will, "run smooth." The truth of the adage has been unpleasantly verified at Dartford. In the County Court held in that town, the Rev. F. W. Murray, the rector of Stone, was sued by a grocer named Hughes for an assault on the latter's son. The boy, who is about thirteen years of age it seems, had imagined himself in love with a little girl named Constance Griffiths, who sat in the next pew to him at church, and had written to her the following letter, composed with the assistance of another lad and his sister:—"From one who loves you. Dear Consey,—I write these few lines to you, hoping to find you quite well. I wish to see you, hoping I not be long to my wish is grattified. If not, please to drop me a line or so, as I am anxious to know the answer. Excuse bad writing. With best love, believe me, your affectionate lover and well-wisher, W. H. Miss Griffiths, the Old Rectory, Stone." This letter happened to fall into the hands of Mrs. Clark, the girl's aunt. She showed it to the rector, who at once went to the national school, which the boy attends, took him to the rectory, beat him severely with a cane, and then took him home to his father, telling the latter that his son had sent an "abominable letter" to a young lady, for which he had beaten him. The father, finding the lad had been severely punished, sent him next day to a surgeon, who stated in evidence that the lad was severely marked. For the defendant it was urged that he had the power as trustee of the school and the clergyman of the parish to punish the boy, and that he had not exceeded his duty. He also said he thought the insult lay in the fact of the lad being only a grocer's boy, while Miss Griffiths was a young lady. The judge, in summing up, said there was no legal justification whatever, and the jury gave a verdict for the plaintiff for £10, the full amount claimed, and costs. If the Rev. F. W. Murray were arbiter in love affairs, half the sweethearts in the kingdom would be separated; for "loving above" and "loving beneath" us are matters of everyday occurrence; yet the world moves on despite such a lamentable condition of affairs!

THE GOSSIP.

An actor dropped down dead on the stage three days back in the German theatre at Amsterdam, while playing the part of Menelas, in La Belle Helene.

Dr. Hayman is to retain the mastership of Rugby School.

There is no truth in the report that the *Times* is to be reduced to twopence.

Miss Fanny Josephs has succeeded Mr. Parry as manager of the Globe Theatre.

The Suez Canal and the Roman Council have called forth a swarm of publications at Paris.

Mr. A. Clint has been elected President of the Society of British Artists.

Music is said to be cultivated more than ever in the United States.

Signor Mario will retire from the stage after fulfilling his engagement at Covent Garden.

The Parisians will have the benefit of Madame Arabella Goddard's playing this winter.

Offenbach is writing another novelty for the Opéra Comique, to be produced next October.

At Sucre, a well-known Bolivian poet, Don Manuel José Tovar, lately committed suicide with a rifle.

A monument is to be erected at Cracow in memory of the three great national poets of Poland—Mickiewicz, Krasinski, and Slowacki.

"The Nightingale" is the title of a new play by Mr. Robertson, to be produced at the Adelphi early this year.

Mr. and Mrs. Wybert Rousby have appeared at the Queen's Theatre, London, in Tom Taylor's drama, "The Fool's Revenge."

Mrs. Lander (Miss Davenport) has reappeared at the Lyceum Theatre after an absence of almost a quarter of a century in America. She had a favourable reception.

Mdlle. Nilsson has presented her acting-manager, Mr. Edward Murray, with a costly set of massive gold sleeve-links, mounted with diamonds and sapphires.

A French musical paper appears to be under the impression that Sullivan's "Prodigal Son" is an opera; as it says that the work in question is about to be put upon the stage of the "Crystal Palace Theatre," and will "add some variety to the *repertoire*."—*Musical Standard.*

A fragment of about 800 lines of an early History of the Holy Graal, in alliterative verse, has been found in the noble Vernon MS., in the Bodleian, by the well-known editor of Early English texts, the Rev. Walter W. Skeat. The fragment is without beginning or end. It will be printed for the Early English Text Society.

It is said that Mr. Gye has engaged Signor Vianesi as the successor of Costa and Arditi. The *Athenæum* asks: Is the manager still determined to demoralize his orchestra by having two conductors? And in that case is the second *chef* to be the gentleman who brought so much discredit on last season's performances?

Mr. Sala's burlesque, "Wat Tyler, M.P.," just produced at the Gaiety Theatre, is well spoken of by some journals, and severely criticised by others, including amongst the latter the *Athenæum*. All the actors appear to have been careless in their study, and the first performance was accordingly more like a rehearsal than a proper representation.

The original of Chaucer's "Man of Law's Tale of Constance" has been proved to be, as Professor G. Stephens, of Copenhagen (in his *Förteckning*, Stockholm, 1847, p. 20), said it was, in an early French Chronicle in the National Library at Stockholm. The story has been much abridged by Chaucer, but all his incidents, and some of his reflections, are in the original. The Swedish authorities have most generously sent the MS. to the British Museum.

Mr. Putnam, the American publisher, tells a characteristic anecdote of Thackeray. The great humorist was at a literary gathering at Mr. Putman's house, when Dr. Rufus Griswold came in, and asked to be introduced. Thackeray received him coldly, and presently said to Putnam, "That's Rufus, is it? He's been abusing me in the *Herald*. I've a mind to charge him with it." Thereupon he walked across to Griswold and said, "Doctor, you've been writing ugly things about me in the *Herald*; you called me a snob: do I look like a snob?" drawing himself up to full height as he said it, and looking thunder on his little antagonist. Griswold denied that he wrote the articles. "But he did, though," Thackeray used to say.

The following scraps of "personal" are from *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*:—

Queen Victoria is very fond of music, and employs some first-rate instrumental performers.

Maggie Mitchell is tickling the stoical Hubites with her "Little Bare-Foot."

The Thompsonian blondes are endeavouring to improve the morals of the Chicagoans with the "Forty Thieves."

Mr. Allerton, a wealthy amateur actor of London, annually hires some theatre in that city, and plays Shakespearean characters for his own amusement.

An English actress who wants a situation advertises herself as "Lizzie Ashley, the Serio Gem."

The Parepa-Rosa troupe are operating operatically in St. Louis.

Miss Muhlbach will try her hand at drama.

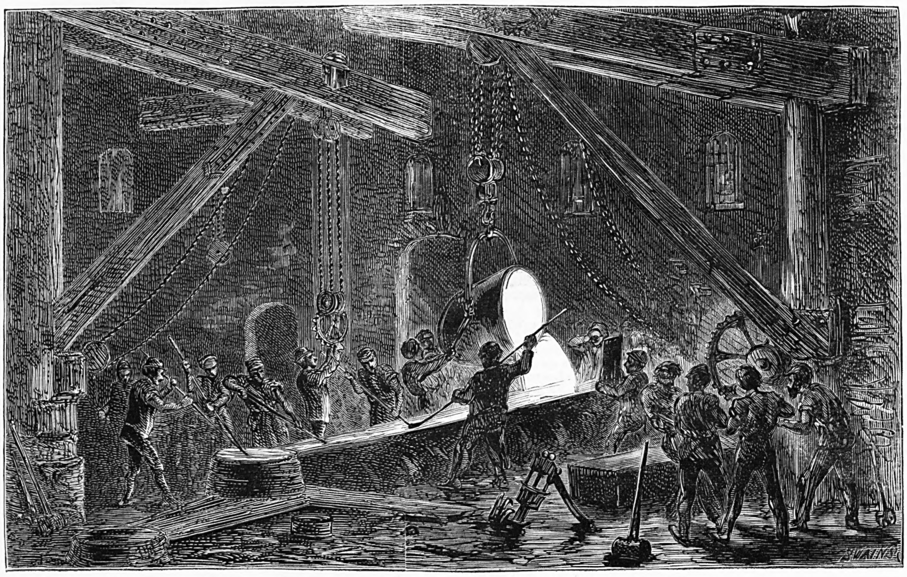
Brigham Young's theatre has appropriately produced "Griffith Gaunt."

Joe Jefferson's eldest son, Charles, has made his *début* on the stage at Chicago.

Suffocated by Charcoal.—One of those melancholy cases of death by the inhalation of charcoal, common enough in France, has occurred this week at Cheltenham. A greengrocer named Weller had lately purchased a business in Winchcomb-street, and is said to have expressed great dissatisfaction at the result of his purchase. On Tuesday night lights were seen by the opposite neighbours in the deceased's bedroom, at their usual hour for retiring to rest; but on Wednesday morning the shop was not opened at its usual time. After some delay the shop door was broken open, and the police, on going to the deceased's bedroom, on the first floor, found it filled to suffocation by the fumes of charcoal. Some charcoal, nearly consumed, was found in an old saucepan at the foot of the bed. Weller and his wife were lying in the bed, the wife already dead, and the husband in an insensible condition. Medical aid was fetched, but notwithstanding that an operation for the excitement of artificial respiration and circulation was tried, the man died about two hours later, not having regained consciousness. It is at present an open question whether the deaths were the result of design or inadvertence. The chimney was closed; but it is said that the deceased were occasionally in the habit of lighting a charcoal fire in their bedroom; and it is suggested that, as they had only just taken possession of the house, they were unaware that the chimney was stopped, and that they were thus accidentally overpowered.

A LARGE CASTING.

Our engraving on this page represents the casting of a large roll at Messrs. R. and J. A. Thompson's, Pot House Bridge Foundry and Boiler Works, Bilston. The roll is for a steel plate mill in the north of England, and is of unusual size. The dimensions are: 11 feet 3 inches long, by 27 inches diameter, with necks 16 inches long by 19 inches diameter. Messrs. Thompson have in hand, in addition to others, a set of three rail rolls measuring 9 feet 1 inch in length by 32 inches diameter. These rolls are duplicates of rolls cast by them for a three high rail mill (supposed to be the largest in the world), and now at work rolling steel rails 60 feet in length, and turning out the enormous quantity of 600 to 700 tons per week. These rolls being for the purpose of rolling steel of heavy section require to be of the best possible quality. The roll we saw cast the other day was made from Lilleshall cold blast pigs, with a judicious mixture of other well-known makes. Messrs. R. and J. A. Thompson are manufacturers of all descriptions of engines and machinery, but are specially noted for their make of mill and forge castings.


CASTING A LARGE ROLL AT MESSRS. R. & J. A. THOMPSON'S FOUNDRY, BILSTON.

LORD NAPIER AND THE BIRMINGHAM VOLUNTEERS.

It seems but the other Sunday that we were some of us listening with bated breath to the intelligence, conveyed by a grateful clergyman to his grateful flock, that Magdala had fallen and that the war in Abyssinia was over. That news was heard by many with a swelling heart and with tearful eyes. Those who had sons among the rocky passes of that distant land sang *Te Deum* that day with an earnestness which mayhap they had never known before; and when they heard that the conqueror of Theodore the King bore the same name as the naval hero of the Crimean War, there was not an Englishman, no, nor an Englishwoman, with sons and brothers engaged in the struggle, who did not remember the name of Napier at eventide. Come the Spring, that event will be two years old; but it is as fresh in our memories now as it was that glad Sunday when we first heard the glorious news; and that the event should be for ever perpetuated as one of the grandest incidents in modern warfare, the hero of Abyssinia was created Lord Napier of Magdala!

A gallant soldier, Lord Napier is one of those men who shun the noise and fuss of "demonstrations" as much as he would regard with disgust an "interviewing" pressman, just now an important personage on the staff of all "enterprising" American journals. The writer of this brief record of Lord Napier's recent visit to Birmingham, which is illustrated in these pages to-day, well remembers his lordship's reception by the Worcestershire gentlemen and yeomen in the fall of 1868, when Lord Napier was the guest of Sir John Pakington at Westwood House, a grand old Elizabethan mansion whose gables and turrets rise boldly from the midst of the oaks and elms which surround it, quite shutting it out from the steam of the neighbouring salt-works at Droitwich. The reception of the great soldier at Worcester was none the less enthusiastic. To shed additional lustre on the demonstration in the old Worcestershire city, Reverdy Johnson, then American Minister to the Court of St. James's, and then also in the height of his popularity, stood by the side of Lord Napier. Representative men both, these two celebrities, one the hero of an hour, the other a hero for all time, spoke in plain and simple terms—the American gracing his speech with pleasant allusions to local commerce, the Englishman modestly recounting the part he had taken in the struggle for England's supremacy in Abyssinia.

> Life is real! Life is earnest!
> And the grave is not its goal;
> "Dust thou art, to dust returnest,"
> Was not spoken of the soul.

Thus sings the poet whom we claim for our own, although his songs are poured out beneath the skies of the New World. And no one can sympathise more heartily with Longfellow's sentiment than Lord Napier.

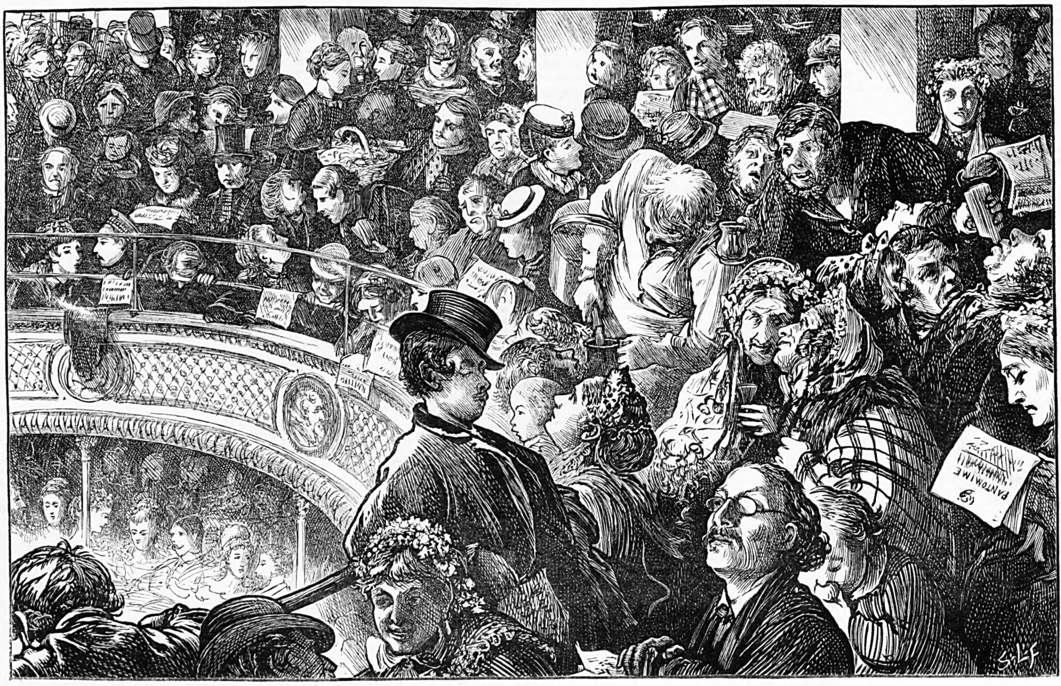
His lordship's reception at Birmingham was of the cheeriest, from the time of his arrival at Snow Hill until the termination of the events of the day. The Mayor, Aldermen Phillips and Ryland, and the Town Clerk represented the Borough; Lieut.-Col. Ratcliff (whose guest Lord Napier was to be), with several other officers, attended on behalf of the Volunteers; and the Chairman of the Board of Guardians (Mr. Pollock), the Rector of Birmingham (Dr. Wilkinson), and the Chaplain to the First Warwickshire Volunteers, were the other chief personages amongst about 1,000 spectators. Lord Napier was accompanied by his son, Captain Napier, who rode with his father and Colonel Ratcliff to the latter's residence, the cheers that rung through the streets being only indicative of the after-reception which the Volunteers had resolved to give his lordship.

The programme was divided into four parts—first, the reception at Snow Hill station; second, the presentation by the Corporation of an address to Lord Napier at the Central Reference Library, Ratcliff-place; third, a banquet to his lordship in the magnificent coffee-room of the Great Western Hotel; and fourth, Lord Napier's presentation of the prizes to the Volunteers. The banquet was a most successful and brilliant affair, and Mr. Hall's perfect arrangements earned for him general thanks. Next week we shall illustrate the banquet at the Great Western; in the present Number we give an engraving of the ceremony at the Town Hall in the evening. The Mayor presided over a brilliant company, and, *ápropos* to the occasion, quoted a poem by an old Birmingham writer (Freeth), which appears in Mr. Langford's interesting volume "A Century of Birmingham Life":—

> May truth her glorious standard rear,
> Her sacred rights to guard;
> And genuine Merit everywhere
> Meet with her just reward.

Colonel Ratcliff introduced Lord Napier, who made a characteristic speech. He could not say too much of the volunteer movement, which had "assumed a position of great importance in the country." He thought also the Volunteers had assumed a higher position in society; "and as a volunteer myself," concluded his lordship gracefully and mirthfully, "I am very proud to be your associate." These words of Lord Napier's fell on willing and gratified ears, and few Volunteers left the Hall without feeling prouder and gladder than when they entered it to receive the prizes they had honourably won. Then the prize-list (for which we cannot find room) was read, and the prizes were given away by Lord Napier, who said a few kind words to each recipient. Speeches by several gentlemen followed, Lieut.-Col. Ratcliff proposing, and Sir Charles Adderley, M.P., seconding, a vote of thanks to Lord Napier for his kind attendance. Mr. Newdegate and Mr. Muntz also spoke. From first to last the proceedings were of a very gratifying character, and Lieut.-Col. Ratcliff, who initiated the affair, and who had the honour of entertaining Lord Napier, deserves the congratulations of the Volunteers in particular, and of the town in general, for the success which attended the day's proceedings.

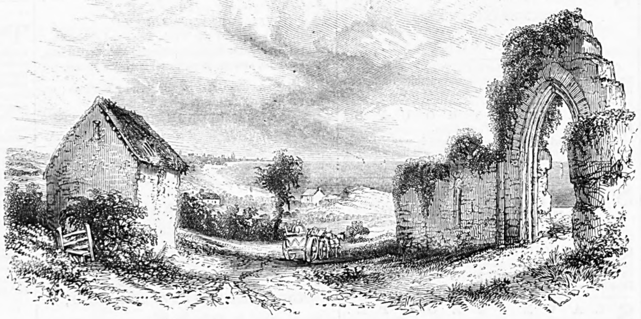
Lord Napier of Magdala has been elected a Fellow of the Royal Society.



BOXING NIGHT AT THE THEATRE.

A RELIC OF A DROWNED CITY.

Comparatively few readers probably know that beneath the waves that wash the Suffolk coast lies a city which was once the capital of East Anglia, the see of an English bishop, containing churches and hospices, and which was once a flourishing port. It was known as "The Splendid City," and its praises have been sung in verse. The name of this town—a relic of which, in the shape of an ancient gateway, we engrave on this page—was Donewyc or Denwyck, modernised into Dunwich. It has been inferred that it was a Roman station, but by whom founded is uncertain. At the first survey in the reign of Edward the Confessor, about the middle of the eleventh century, it contained about three carves of land (300 acres), twelve bordarii (farmers), and 120 burgesses, and paid £10 towards the revenues of the kingdom. Twenty years afterwards it contained only two carves of land, the other having been drowned by the sea; but it had slightly increased in population. About the beginning of the reign of Henry II. it became a royal demesne, and was a town of some note, carrying on various kinds of commerce, and paying £133 6s. 8d. towards the dowry of the Princess Maude, the King's daughter, whilst Ipswich, the neighbouring town, was charged only £53 6s. 8d. Those, however, were its palmiest days. In the first year of Edward the First's reign it was quite useless; storms had made the port shift; and, decay once set in, the place never held up its head again. The principal traffic was diverted to another port within the limits of Blytheburgh, and not far from Walberswick Key; but to make some amends for this deprivation Edward II. ordered the Sheriff of Suffolk "to make proclamation for all goods, merchandizes, and fish imported at the new port to be put to sale nowhere but at the ancient market-places in Dunwich, on forfeiture of goods and merchandizes so vended." Richard II. issued a similar mandate, but with no good result; and, as a last resource, the good people of Dunwich entered into a treaty of commerce with Hull and other places for mutual traffic. All this was of no avail; and when Henry VIII. dissolved the monasteries, including the numerous wealthy and religious houses in Dunwich, the *coup de grace* was given to the once-favoured old town. The last church still stands desolate on the cliff overlooking the bay, six arches remaining to mark the spot where the good fathers once prayed and feasted.

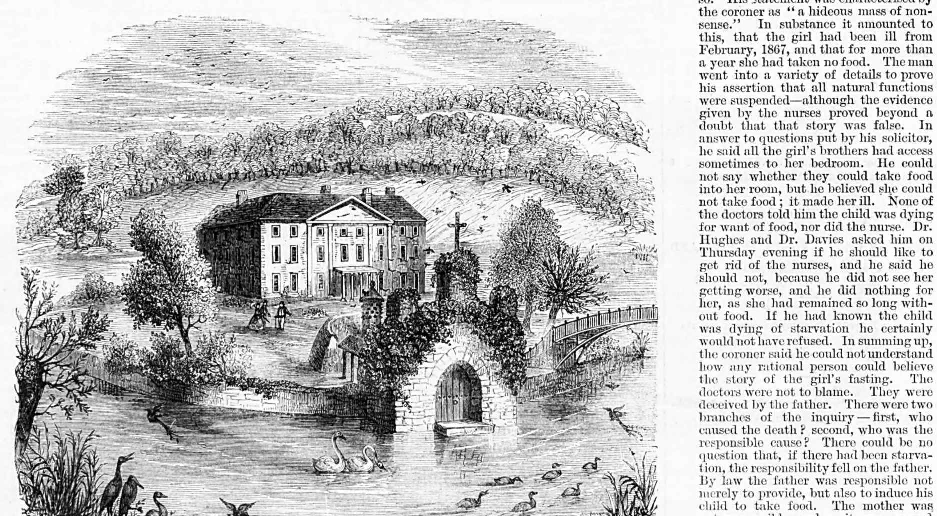


ANCIENT GATEWAY AT DUNWICH.

WALTON HALL.

Charles Waterton, the famous naturalist, and his no less famous hall at Walton, are too well known to need much description at this time. Mr. Waterton, who was descended in the maternal line from Chancellor Sir Thomas More, was born on the 3rd of June, 1782, at Walton Hall, near Wakefield, and received his education at Stonyhurst College, Lancashire, then, as now, the chief Jesuit college in this country. But he cared more for natural history than his school-books, and it is said of him that he had mastered half of Dame Nature's book by heart before he had mastered his "*As in Præsenti*" or his "*Propria quæ maribus.*" Telling the story of his early life he writes: "By a mutual understanding I was considered rat-catcher to the establishment, and also fox-taker, foumont-killer, and crossbow-charger, at the time when the young rooks were fledged. Moreover, I fulfilled the duties of organ-blower and foot-ball-marker with entire satisfaction to the public." After a roving career, he settled for some time at Demerara, and then administered the family property at Guiana, and it was during this time that he laid the foundation of his subsequent fame as a naturalist. After leaving Demerara in 1812 he travelled through various parts of South America, and recorded his travels in a book of "Wanderings"—a favourite volume in our school-days. At Guiana, the interior of which he next penetrated, he gained a world-wide name by his journeys in search of the Wourali poison, but his health giving way he was compelled to return to England to repair his shattered constitution. His "Wanderings" were sharply criticised by some of the journals, who did not hesitate to put Waterton in the same category with Baron Munchausen and Gulliver's Travels. There seems, however, to have been no good reason for this; and the author called upon his assailants to show that he "deviated from the line of truth in one single, solitary instance," and he would "consent to be called an impostor." He was in North America in 1823-24, where he had a charmed life. In 1825 he settled quietly down on his ancestral estate in Yorkshire, and restricted his subsequent travels to Belgium, Holland, Germany, and the South of Europe, visiting Belgium during "the revolution for real liberty" in 1830. In 1829 he had married a Miss Edmonstone, who died in the following year, leaving him a widower with an only child. The hall itself, of which we give an engraving here, stands on a natural island of solid rock, which rises on an inland lake, and the whole estate is surrounded by a formidable stone wall, inside of which its owner would never allow a shot to be fired. Our illustration shows the old entrance, a water gate, the doors of which still show the marks of the cannon balls with which Oliver Cromwell sought to destroy the older mansion, when he laid siege, with his Roundhead army, to the loyal cavalier and his family, zealous defenders in their day, if not of "Church," at all events of "King." As our readers will see, the house has no great architectural attractions, but these are rather to be looked for in the "happy family" of aquatic birds who made its moat their home. Indeed, Walton Hall was famous throughout the north as a new paradise for animals; and, as showing practically what might be the state of things even now, were man not carnivorous, and gifted with the irrepressible bump of destructiveness, around the lake stretch grounds broken into every variety of wood, meadow, morass, and rivulet—all encompassed by a lofty wall, entirely shutting in the domain. Thus secured from attack, and confiding in the tried favour of the master of the estate, birds and beasts of every known British species came to live with Charles Waterton. For the starlings, owls, and jackdaws, he built lodgings expressly; the other *feræ naturæ* took apartments as it suited them. You might look from his study window and see the "natural history" of the British islands unrolled, with illustrations of nature herself. Shy herons stood on one leg under the windows and fished; pochards and mallards dived and quacked, and circled about the water. Canadian geese, flying over to spend the winter south, saw Waterton's oasis—perhaps heard of it from intelligent "anseres" before—and pitched their tent there. Teals bred upon the lake; cormorants passed a pleasant and safe month or so with him, till the herrings were ready; gulls and terns of all kinds put Walton Hall on their visiting list; and wild swans now and then dropped in to leave a feather or two by way of bird-card upon the pleased proprietor. Nothing feared him; nothing got out of his way when he walked about his domain; on the contrary, when his tall figure strode from the house there was a rush and flutter of wings towards him, mindful of the barley and Indian corn with which his shooting jacket was always stuffed. No gun was ever heard within the sacred precincts, except when the spirit of evil, in the form of a fox, got inside the nine-foot walls, like Satan into Paradise, and made havoc with his innocent pets. It was a strange scene, but "it was an idea like others," and it proved, and proves to this day, how thoroughly tameable the wildest creature becomes, so soon as the compact of kindness is established and faithfully observed on the part of man, the master and lord of all.

Charles Waterton died in May, 1865.



WALTON HALL.

Boring for Coal at Alfreton.—The borings on the estate of J. Hemsley, Esq., at East Leake, are progressing very favourably, the strata being of a satisfactory nature. It is believed that in a short time coal will be found; if so, no doubt a large colliery will soon be established.

THE SHEFFIELD AND CHESTERFIELD RAILWAY.

This new line will afford great conveniences to Midlanders. By express trains between Sheffield and London, *viâ* Trent and Leicester, the distance will be done in about three hours and three quarters. We understand that no arrangement has yet been come to between the Midland Company and some of the colliery owners at Dronfield, regarding the price to be charged for the carriage of coal and coke to Sheffield—the price asked by the Company being 2s. 8d. per ton, and 6d. per ton for the use of the wagons. These charges, with cost of cartage to the line, where the collieries are distant and have no sidings, are such that it is much feared unless the company greatly moderate the charge it will have the effect of causing coal and coke to be carted as usual. Some surprise is expressed that the company should ask only 11d. per ton for the conveyance of coal and coke to Chesterfield. The disparity in the charges for the same distance will prevent the Sheffield manufacturers from reaping that advantage in the reduction of price which the opening of this line might have been supposed to have conferred upon them. The Midland Company, however, is too enterprising and too liberal in its management not to do all that can be fairly required at their hands. The line will be a great boon generally. It will be called into requisition for distant places, and the quantity of coal sent from the Dronfield district by rail will be enormous. The West Staveley Company, Dronfield Silkstone Coal Company, the Unstone Colliery, and several others, have sidings to the line. The first when in full work will raise to the surface one thousand tons a day, the second six hundred tons, and the last about the same quantity: besides which, a new and important colliery, recently projected by Messrs. J. Rhodes and Son, will, when put down, be on a scale commensurate with the others. The ironstone at present unworked is expected to be brought into the market, and it is likely at no distant period that works will be called into existence similar to other ironworks in the neighbourhood, the ironstone having been in several cases already arranged for in connection with the coal.

An inmate of the Worksop Union escaped a few days ago. He was captured, and on his way back to the House fell down and died in the road.

THE BOILER EXPLOSION AT BRADLEY.

In an article on the recent disaster at Bradley, caused by the explosion of a boiler, our able contemporary, *Engineering*, after noticing the "vagaries of 'crowner's quest' law," refers to the result of the coroner's enquiry. And we have seen (says our contemporary) this verdict commented on in print as satisfactory, and as one "over which all sensible men will rejoice"! We are not surprised at the verdict—we could not be surprised at *any* verdict returned by a coroner's jury; but we must certainly express our wonder that such a verdict can be considered to be justifiable by any one who has had any experience in the construction or working of steam boilers. The hope expressed by the jury, "that the evidence that has been disclosed at this inquest may be a warning to owners of boilers," reads as if the fact that steam boilers are liable to corrosion, and that this corrosion is a source of extreme danger, was an entirely new discovery, to which the jury desired in a mild way to direct attention. If the Bradley explosion had been the first of its kind—if there had not previously been dozens of similar explosions caused simply by the use of boilers which were unfit for work—if for some time past there had not been, year after year, a terrible loss of life at our ironworks from the disgraceful carelessness which has led to the employment of such boilers—then we might have accepted the verdict of the wise men of Wolverhampton without comment, and have hoped that it would in due time bring forth good fruit. But the warning has been given over and over again without effect, and it is quite time that more decisive measures should be taken to put down an evil which shows no signs of abatement.

The fact that a boiler is believed by its owner to be safe, simply because he has no knowledge of its condition, is, we hold, no reason whatever why he should be relieved of responsibility. No jury would hold a railway company irresponsible for an accident because the defect which led to it—although open to ready discovery if proper supervision had been exercised—was unknown to the company's officers. And there is no reason why the owner of a steam boiler, which explodes from causes which might have been discovered by sufficiently careful inspection, should be treated more leniently than a railway company. We can understand that there is an indisposition on the part of coroners' juries to "make an example" of anybody; but if a stop is to be put to the disgraceful carelessness which now exists, the example *must* be made; and we can only hope in the interest of the public at large that no fair chance of making it may be missed in future.

THE WELSH FASTING GIRL.

The melancholy particulars surrounding the death of Sarah Jacobs, "the Welsh Fasting Girl," were given in last week's paper. At the adjourned inquest a solicitor appeared on behalf of the father and mother of the deceased girl. The father, Evan Jacobs, was not called, but volunteered to give evidence, and was allowed, after the usual caution, to do so. His statement was characterised by the coroner as "a hideous mass of nonsense." In substance it amounted to this, that the girl had been ill from February, 1867, and that for more than a year she had taken no food. The man went into a variety of details to prove his assertion that all natural functions were suspended—although the evidence given by the nurses proved beyond a doubt that that story was false. In answer to questions put by his solicitor, he said all the girl's brothers had access sometimes to her bedroom. He could not say whether they could take food into her room, but he believed she could not take food; it made her ill. None of the doctors told him the child was dying for want of food, nor did the nurse. Dr. Hughes and Dr. Davies asked him on Thursday evening if he should like to get rid of the nurses, and he said he should not, because he did not see her getting worse, and he did nothing for her, as she had remained so long without food. If he had known the child was dying of starvation he certainly would not have refused. In summing up, the coroner said he could not understand how any rational person could believe the story of the girl's fasting. The doctors were not to blame. They were deceived by the father. There were two branches of the inquiry—first, who caused the death? second, who was the responsible cause? There could be no question that, if there had been starvation, the responsibility fell on the father. By law the father was responsible not merely to provide, but also to induce his child to take food. The mother was not responsible, unless it was proved that she was given food by the father and had kept some from the child. There had been criminal negligence on the part of the father, and the only question was one of degree. The father had on oath that day endeavoured to impose on the jury with a hideous mass of nonsense, and he should ask if it was easier to believe the natural laws reversed or that the father was stating falsehoods. The life of the girl had been sacrificed, and the question arose if the offence committed was murder or manslaughter. The cases cited seemed to show that it was manslaughter.

The jury deliberated for a quarter of an hour, and returned a verdict that "the child died of starvation and negligence, and that neglect to induce the child to take food on the part of the father constituted manslaughter."

The father was sent for trial, but admitted to bail.

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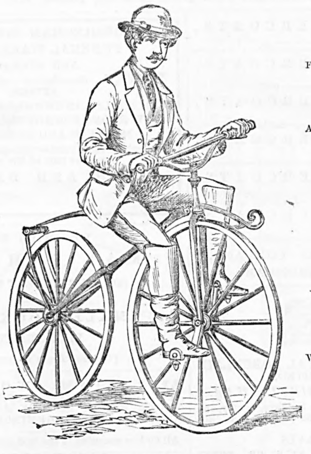
[490

CHRISTMAS PRESENTS.



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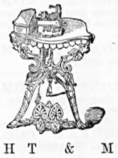

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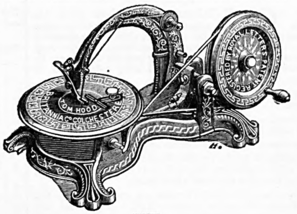

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